

THE ART OF REMEMBERING:  
TEXT ADAPTATION AND SETTING IN  
HANNS EISLER'S *ANAKREONTISCHE FRAGMENTE*  
AND *HÖLDERLIN-FRAGMENTE*

BY

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## INTRODUCTION

Hanns Eisler is considered by many scholars to be the epitome of the twentieth-century political musician. He did not shy away from politics; rather he made them an integral part of his compositional output, infusing the majority of his music with his strong belief in socialist principles. As the “first Marxist-inspired musician of talent and stature to succeed,”<sup>1</sup> it is easy to see how this could become the defining characteristic of his career. Until very recently the majority of Eisler studies have focused on that intersection of politics and music: examining the ways in which Eisler attempted to incorporate his socialist ideals into his music; detailing the political difficulties he faced during his time in the United States, which culminated in his departure in 1948; and commenting on the remainder of his career as a state-supported composer in socialist East Germany. In addition to, or perhaps as a part of, the interest in Eisler’s musicopolitical life, his position within the Second Viennese School narrative has also been a frequent topic of discussion. Along with Alban Berg and Anton Webern, Eisler was one of Arnold Schoenberg’s star pupils. Their subsequent falling out due to conflicting political convictions is therefore inextricably linked to the well-known “music and politics” narrative.<sup>2</sup> It is fascinating that a man so well schooled in the primarily apolitical, culturally elite circles of 1920s avant-garde music would later develop an

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1 Günter Meyer, “Ein erfahrener, gebildeter, interessierter Dialektier,” from liner notes of *Hanns Eisler: Dokumente*, Berlin Classics

2 Eisler is notorious for his stinging critiques of his former teacher, calling him a “petty bourgeois [composer] of a quite horrendous kind.” Despite such harsh criticism, Eisler was, throughout his life, a staunch supporter of Schoenberg’s talent and musical innovation, but loathed him for his lack of political motivation, for his refusal to use his immense cultural power to affect political change. Eisler stated that, “Even in his most ‘radical’ works, Schoenberg was no artist, no literary figure; he was no more than a musician,” (Eisler, “Arnold Schönberg, der musikalische Reaktionär,” *Musik und Politik: Schriften, 1924-1948*, 14.), and that Schoenberg’s “innovations, mistaken for attempts at sabotage and revolution, remained within the realm of music,” (Betz, *Hanns Eisler Political Musician*, 8).

extremely close friendship and collaborative relationship with Bertolt Brecht, one of the more strongly political and anti-elitist artists of the twentieth century. As Markus Roth notes, “Since the earliest time, Eisler the political composer was played against the (fallen?) student of Schoenberg.”<sup>3</sup>

After the 1998 centenary celebration of Eisler’s birth, the publication of complete works and conference reports introduced relatively few new analytical approaches to the field of Eisler studies. While the contributions of Albrecht Betz, Günter Mayer, Albrecht Dümmling, Manfred Grabs, and others lay the foundation for research on Eisler’s life and music, their approaches were firmly grounded in a Cold War context that focused more on the circumstances surrounding his music than the music itself. Many early inquiries into Eisler’s career and œuvre have such a strong political agenda – either socialist or anti-socialist – that they fail to assess objectively the significance of his contribution to music. Thankfully, since the centenary celebration there has been considerable growth in the interest in Eisler’s music, and much has been written in the last ten years that has broadened the scope of Eisler analysis. Biographies from Friedericke Wißmann and Christian Glanz provide new perspectives on Eisler, reexamining his life and work through a distinctly post-Cold War lens and giving equal attention to the many periods and styles of his music; Joy Calico has made a number of significant contributions to studies of the Eisler-Brecht relationship, exploring their collaborative work for the opera stage, film, theatrical productions, and other vocal works; Horst Weber’s *“I am not a hero, I am a composer”*: *Hanns Eisler in Hollywood* addresses Eisler’s time in Hollywood, providing detailed analysis of Eisler’s film scores, songs from the *Hollywood*

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<sup>3</sup> Markus Roth, *Der Gesang als Asyl: Analytische Studien zu Hanns Eislers Hollywood Liederbuch*, (Hofheim, Germany: Wolke Verlag, 2007), 14.

*Liederbuch*, and other works written between 1942 and 1948 (Piano Sonata No. 3, Nonet No. 2, Variations for Piano, etc.); and theorist Markus Roth's *Der Gesang als Asyl: Analytische Studien zu Hanns Eislers Hollywood-Liederbuch* offers what is to date the most in-depth musical analysis of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. The related and still developing field of exile studies continues to provide scholars with a new lens through which to view Eisler's exile experience.<sup>4</sup> Even with all of this relatively new and insightful scholarship, many avenues remain for musical and textual analysis of Eisler's œuvre.

I, like many others, was initially drawn to Eisler as political musical figure. The combination of his widely recognized skill as an avant-garde composer and the strength of his political convictions creates a compelling narrative of a man struggling to find a bridge between contemporary art music and his own political engagement. These parts of Eisler's life are crucial to understanding certain aspects of his music, but they can and often do overshadow the music itself. As a singer, I am most familiar with Eisler's songs, particularly those of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, which were written during his exile in Los Angeles and are less overtly political than other songs in his œuvre. Repeated performances have led me to more thorough study, deepening my understanding of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*; the more I perform and study these songs the more I come see them as truly great works of art – honest, expressive, and brilliantly crafted both textually and musically. Eisler's astute adaptations and settings of the texts simultaneously convey

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4 Articles including Andrea F. Bohlman and Philip V. Bohlman's "(Un)Covering Hanns Eisler's *Hollywood Songbook*," (*Danish Yearbook of Musicology*, Vol. 35, 2007); Ferdinand Zehentreiter's "Hanns Eisler – die rastlose Suche," (*Komponisten im Exil: 16 Künstlerschicksale des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Ferdinand Zehentreiter, Henschel Verlag, 2008); Sally Bick's "Political Ironies: Hanns Eisler in Hollywood and Behind the Iron Curtain," (*Acta Musicologica*, Vol. 75, 2003); and Stathis Gourgouris's "The Lyric in Exile (Meditations on the *Hollywood Liederbuch*)," (*Qui Parle*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2004) seek to explore in greater detail the ways in which Eisler's exile affected his creative output.

the individuality and universality of his exile experience, allowing these songs to connect with listeners just as the great works of earlier lieder composers did.

Two groups of songs from the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, demonstrate Eisler's great technical and artistic abilities, both in their complex yet accessible musical settings, and in Eisler's creative adaptations of the words of Anacreon and Friedrich Hölderlin. A close examination of the relationship between the textual and musical components of the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente* gives us a means of understanding the uncertainty and complexities of life in exile. My analysis of Eisler's changes to the original texts – cutting material, reordering lines of text, changing words, cobbling together montages from multiple fragments – reveals his ability to find his own voice from the words of others. Musical analysis demonstrates the ways in which Eisler connects the uncertainty of the texts to the settings by establishing expectations – harmonic, rhythmic, declamatory – and then disrupting those expectations, destabilizing potential resolution. The common themes of uncertainty – uncertainty about the outcome of the war, about Eisler's future in the US, his political idealism, and the future of his homeland – and lack of resolution allow Eisler to express his exile experience fully, from anger and bitterness in the *Anakreontische Fragmente* to remembrance, longing, and hope in the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*.

## Chapter 1: Hanns Eisler – Composer, Poet, Exile

Before I delve into more detailed discussion of the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, a brief review of Eisler's biography is appropriate to provide some context for his Hollywood exile. Hanns Eisler was born in Bonn in 1898, the son of a well-known Jewish intellectual father and a Lutheran working-class mother, and moved with his family to Vienna in 1901. He was drafted into the Austro-Hungarian army in 1916 and fought in the First World War. Upon his return home in 1919 he began his formal study of music with Arnold Schoenberg. He quickly rose within the ranks, becoming one of Schoenberg's most prized and promising devotees. Eisler remained under Schoenberg's tutelage until 1923, at which point he found himself, thanks to his teacher's influence, at the forefront of the European avant-garde music scene. The two years following the completion of Eisler's studies, however, were a time of political realization, and by the time Eisler moved to Berlin in 1925 to teach at the Klindworth-Scharwenka Conservatory, he and Schoenberg had parted ways due to ideological differences.<sup>5</sup> Eisler felt that music should evolve to serve both artistic and larger societal functions, rather than remain a cloistered indulgence of the cultural elite. Schoenberg, on

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<sup>5</sup> There is no shortage of information concerning the relationship between Eisler and Schoenberg. For further reading, the Eisler biographies *Hanns Eisler Political Musician* by Albrecht Betz; *Hanns Eisler: Komponist. Weltbürger. Revolutionär* by Friedericke Wißmann; and *Hanns Eisler: Werk und Leben* by Christian Glanz all cover this subject in great detail. In addition to the extensive epistolary record of the falling out between the two men, Eisler continued to address the subject of his former teacher, both in interviews with Hans Bunge in *Fragen Sie mehr über Brecht* and in his writings, published in two volumes of *Hanns Eisler: Schriften und Dokumente* and in *A Rebel in Music: Selected Writings*.

the other hand, famously said, “If it is art, it is not for the masses. If it is for the masses, it is not art.”<sup>6</sup>

After breaking with Schoenberg, Eisler eschewed his avant-garde musical training as elitist, and instead composed music that was predominantly diatonic and functional to fit with his increasingly strong socialist convictions.<sup>7</sup> James Wierzbicki notes, “That Eisler was anti-elitist at heart is evidenced by his involvement, while still in Vienna, with various ‘workers’ singing societies. But after moving to Berlin...he became a zealot.”<sup>8</sup> His zeal was inspired, at least in part, by his older siblings, Gerhart Eisler and Ruth Fischer (née Elfriede Eisler), who held leadership positions in the Communist Party of Germany (KPD). To achieve his goal of integrating music into political action, Eisler composed a wide variety of music that focused primarily on furthering the proletariat cause: “Kampflieder” (“songs for the struggle”), film scores, and, as a result of his introduction to Bertolt Brecht, incidental music for theatrical productions. From their first meeting in 1930, Brecht and Eisler developed a close friendship and professional association that resulted in numerous collaborations on theater projects and vocal works; these pieces became part of their larger goal to develop more socially relevant art forms.

With the 1933 appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of the Reich, the political situation in Germany became significantly more difficult for Eisler, who was deemed persona non grata by the Nazis. Following Brecht’s departure for Scandinavia, Eisler left Berlin under the pretext of visiting Anton Webern in Vienna, marking the beginning of a fifteen-year exile that took him throughout Europe and across the Atlantic.

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6 From a letter to William S. Schlam, June 26, 1945. Arnold Schönberg Center website Briefwechsel page ([http://www.schoenberg.at/letters/search\\_show\\_letter.php?ID\\_Number=4169](http://www.schoenberg.at/letters/search_show_letter.php?ID_Number=4169)), accessed through a search on June 26, 2013.

7 Joy Calico, *Brecht at the Opera*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 89.

8 James Wierzbicki, “Hanns Eisler and the FBI,” *Music and Politics* 2, (Summer 2008): 9, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0002.202>

In 1934 he traveled to Copenhagen to visit Brecht. In 1935 he went on a series of lecture and concert tours through the United States sponsored by George Gershwin, Aaron Copland, and Henry Cowell. 1936-38 saw him in London, Paris, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Brussels, Prague, Madrid, and Copenhagen (to see Brecht once more), before finally arriving in the United States, in January 1938, where he hoped to settle more permanently.<sup>9</sup> He taught briefly at the State Conservatory in Mexico City, after which he returned to New York to the New School for Social Research (also known as the University in Exile) where he worked with Theodor Adorno on a film music project funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.<sup>10</sup>

The eight years between Eisler's first meeting with Brecht and Eisler's emigration to the United States were a crucial period of transition for Eisler's musical language, during which time he reconciled his political ideals with his bourgeois education and aesthetic. After disavowing dodecaphony in the mid-1920s, Eisler sought to compose music that was, as noted earlier, "well-crafted, diatonic, and functional."<sup>11</sup> But his categorical dismissal of Schoenberg and the avant-garde was short-lived. By 1931, after two visits to the Soviet Union, Eisler slowly returned to the dodecaphonic techniques of

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9 Albrecht Betz, *Hanns Eisler Political Musician*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 165.

10 Eisler and Adorno continued to collaborate after their time in New York. Their mutual interest in film led them both to Hollywood, where they focused on the role of music in film. Their work together culminated in the publication of what is still a foundational text for film scoring, *Composing for the Films* (1947).

11 Calico, 89. In a concert review from the 1999 Hanns Eisler centenary celebration, New York Times contributor David Stevens expresses a much stronger opinion of such "well-crafted, diatonic, functional" music, saying "Eisler did not much help his own cause with his unswerving political commitment, an attitude that regardless of the nature of the commitment is generally assumed to be an inevitable producer of banality." ("Hanns Eisler Centennial Separates Music From Politics: Rehabilitating a Composer," *The New York Times*, Nov. 3, 1999

his musical training. He began writing concert music again, incorporating “elements of jazz, workers’ songs, and neoclassicism.”<sup>12</sup>

Eisler’s return to elements of the avant-garde coincided with his increasing involvement in the Popular Front, an anti-fascist organization that brought together the working class and the bourgeoisie, as well as with his election as chairman of the International Music Bureau, the music division of the Comintern.<sup>13</sup> Joy Calico notes,

Eisler was predisposed to interpret the Popular Front’s inclusionary agenda as an endorsement of a synthesis he had already begun to investigate, which was the use of twelve-tone music as a vehicle for leftist politics. He voiced this position most clearly in an essay coauthored with Ernst Bloch in 1937. [...] Bloch and Eisler argued against both bourgeois claims for artistic autonomy and workers’ claims that artistic traditions must always be easily accessible, building their case for the relevance of the avant-garde to the Popular Front.<sup>14</sup>

With the potential for dodecaphony to benefit Eisler’s political aims came a sense of caution that the music not be so alien to the working class that they had no point of entry to appreciate it. As biographer Fredericke Wißmann observes, even in his twelve-tone works Eisler wanted the music to “remain understandable. To this end he regularly used tone row structures that contained elements of functional harmony.”<sup>15</sup> In an essay from 1936 titled “Die Konsonanzbehandlung in der Zwölftontechnik” (“The handling of

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<sup>12</sup> Calico, 89.

<sup>13</sup> Calico, 90. The Communist International, or Comintern, was an international organization founded to promote communism throughout the world, and oversaw the formation of various groups to meet that goal. One such project was the Popular Front, a movement that sought to consolidate anti-fascist sentiment by including not only communists and socialists, but “anti-fascists of all sociopolitical stripes, even the bourgeoisie” (Calico, 88). It was met with strong opposition from some hardline leftists, including Brecht, who saw the inclusion of bourgeois activists as counterproductive to their larger political aims.

<sup>14</sup> Calico, 89.

<sup>15</sup> Wißmann, 61.



consonance in twelve-tone technique”), Eisler explored issues surrounding the treatment of dissonance and consonance, noting that it is possible to “compose an atonal piece with consonances and a tonal piece with dissonances,” going so far as to ask, “whether the method of twelve-tone composition could be a new approach to dealing with consonance.”<sup>16</sup>

After a few years of living in the United States, the artistic and intellectual challenges Eisler grappled with during the 1930s began to give way to the more pressing, practical issue of earning reliable income. He moved to Los Angeles in 1942 in the hope of finding steadier and more lucrative work composing for Hollywood’s still-booming movie industry. He eventually found enough work to support a relatively comfortable life in Pacific Palisades, and garnered two Academy Award nominations for his scores to Fritz Lang’s film *Hangmen Also Die* (1943) and Clifford Odet’s *None But the Lonely Heart* (1944). In addition to film composition, Eisler’s move to Los Angeles reunited him with his friend Brecht, renewing their collaborative efforts. Despite relatively steady work and moderate success in Hollywood, Eisler found himself the victim of numerous attacks and slander in the press as a result of his politics. He was one of the first of a rapidly growing number of artists and intellectuals who found themselves blacklisted due to their political beliefs.<sup>17</sup> Many people came to Eisler’s aid, most notably Thomas Mann and Charlie Chaplin. In 1947 Eisler was called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee, at which time one the chief investigator, Robert E. Stripling stated,

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16 Eisler, “[Die Konsonanzbehandlung in der Zwölftontechnik],” *Musik und Politik: Schriften I, 1924-1948*, 389.

17 The opinion of Eisler in the press and in Washington, D.C., was not just the result of his own political beliefs; his brother, Gerhard Eisler, who had also fled Germany, was considered the number one communist agent living in the United States. Gerhard’s close connection to the Soviet Union played no small part in Hanns being called before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Hanns’ sister, Ruth Fischer, turned from her past as a devout communist, becoming a virulent anti-communist and even testified against her own brother during his HUAC hearings.

“My purpose is to show that Mr. Eisler is the Karl Marx of communism in the musical field, and he is well aware of it,” to which Eisler replied, “I would be flattered.”<sup>18</sup> The committee did not find his sharp wit endearing, to say the least, and after realizing that he faced the threat of deportation, he chose to leave the United States in March of 1948, returning to his hometown of Vienna.

In May 1948, shortly after his arrival in Europe, Eisler delivered a famous lecture at the Second International Congress of Composers and Music Critics in Prague on the social relevance of music. He bemoaned the state of modern Western music and its two dominant figures, Schoenberg and Stravinsky, and declared,

After all the excesses and experiments, it appears today to be the job of music of our time to lead music back to a higher form of society, to lead it back from the private to the universal [...] Perhaps music will then take on a more friendly and more joyful character after this period of disinclination, trouble, and self-torment.<sup>19</sup>

When his attempts to secure a teaching position in Vienna were rejected, Eisler became a citizen of the newly formed socialist East German Republic in 1949. He contributed to the cultural foundation of the DDR by composing the national anthem, “Auferstanden aus Ruinen,” and collaborated with Brecht on many new projects until the writer’s death in 1956. Eisler spent the remainder of his life in East Germany and continued to write music that looked toward an idealistic socialist society, despite gradually declining favor with ruling party officials. His last work, the *Ernste Gesänge* (intentionally referencing

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<sup>18</sup> *Hearings Regarding Hanns Eisler: Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities*, 80th Congress, 25 (1947), 25.

<sup>19</sup> Hanns Eisler, “Basic Social Questions of Modern Music,” *A Rebel in Music*, edited by Manfred Grabs, translated by Marjorie Meyer, (Berlin: Seven Seas Publishers, 1978), 166.

Brahms), was written in the wake of the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Soviet Communist party<sup>20</sup> and reflects Eisler's sadness, regret, and perhaps a loss of idealism. He died a few weeks after its completion, in September of 1962.

## EISLER IN HOLLYWOOD AND THE *HOLLYWOOD LIEDERBUCH*

*"[The Hollywood Liederbuch] stands as a milestone in the history of the art song, like the great cycles of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and Hugo Wolf. ...What is most noteworthy in Eisler's work is that we find nothing in his music to be conventional or cut and dried. It is full of unbelievable vitality. The diversity of the texts, which span from antiquity to Goethe and Hölderlin up to the poets of our time, creates a wide range of content, by which the colorfulness of the world is reflected back and transformed into something new. Elements appear in the musical interpretation...in a new light, as if we are seeing them for the first time."*<sup>21</sup>

- Erwin Ratz, on the occasion of Eisler's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday

The songs of the *Hollywood Liederbuch* represent an exceptionally turbulent and complex period in Eisler's life. At the time he left Germany, many left-leaning artists were choosing between immigrating to the United States and going east to the Soviet

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20 The 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party was the 1956 party meeting at which Nikita Khrushchev denounced the cult of Joseph Stalin and made known the atrocities committed under Stalin's regime.

21 Erwin Ratz, "Hanns Eisler zum 50. Geburtstag," *Europäische Rundschau* (Vienna, 1948), 1024.

Union. His decision to head west, while not without its difficulties, was most likely the wiser choice, as Albrecht Betz notes.

Eisler did well to emigrate to the USA. At that time in the Soviet Union the cult of personality was reaching new heights, show trials and ‘purges’ were in full swing. In his flight from Fascism, Eisler could here have easily gone from the frying pan into the fire, particularly as victims included writers to whom he was close: [Sergei] Tretiakov and Ernst Ottwalt,<sup>22</sup>

Compared to the reception he might have received in the Soviet Union, the United States was a relatively safe place to find work. The attraction to Hollywood was multifaceted: his reputation as a film composer was well established, so Hollywood had the potential for regular work in the still-booming film industry of the 1940s; additionally, many other German émigrés had made their way to Los Angeles before Eisler for the same reasons. Eisler arrived in Hollywood towards the end of the glamorous film era. It was still the Hollywood of musical revues with big bands and masses of dancers, and of the star cult – an era that produced films like *Casablanca*, *Rebecca*, and *The Maltese Falcon*. At the same time Hollywood show business was booming, the war was making it possible to produce films that were more political in content.<sup>23</sup> As a result of its left-leaning political climate, Hollywood became a new center for prominent German artists who had fled the conflict in Europe: writers Alfred Döblin, Leonhard Frank, Lion Fuechtwanger, Heinrich and Thomas Mann, Franz Werfel, and Carl Zuckmayer settled there, as did Schoenberg,

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<sup>22</sup> Betz, 166.

<sup>23</sup> Fritz Lang’s 1943 film, *Hangmen Also Die*, is a perfect example of this. With the screenplay by Bertolt Brecht and the music by Eisler, it is rife with socialist themes.

Ernst Toch and Bruno Walter, directors Max Reinhardt and Berthold Viertel, and actors Fritz Kortner, Peter Lorre, and Oskar Homolka.<sup>24</sup>

With such a community of fellow left-leaning exiles, Eisler was not alone in Hollywood in the 1940s, but Hollywood was not his, nor any of the other exiles' home. Despite the relatively tolerant political environment, the potential for lucrative studio work, and the large exile community, the majority of Eisler's fellow émigrés felt out of place in Los Angeles. They felt conflicted, torn between their scorn for an overwhelmingly capitalist, profit-driven industry, and their own hopes and desires for material success.<sup>25</sup> They also felt the duality of balancing the relative comfort and safety of their temporary home with the strong desire to return home. Such inner conflict is at the core of life in exile, and informs the multi-layered, often seemingly contradictory emotions expressed in the works of exiled artists.<sup>26</sup>

Eisler, who was becoming increasingly comfortable with his life in the United States, felt this conflict deeply. Inner turmoil intensified his exile experience, making him more reflective than was his tendency. This reflection led to a softening of his overtly political (anti-bourgeois) musical stance and allowed him to explore musical and textual avenues that he otherwise might not have pursued, most notably in his setting of lyric

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<sup>24</sup> Betz, 183.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Recent contributions in the field of exile studies have led to deeper musicological explorations into the circumstances facing exiled musicians, notably *Music and Displacement: Diasporas, Mobilities, and Dislocations in Europe and Beyond* (Levi and Scheduling, editors), allowing a more comprehensive view of Eisler's time in Hollywood, and of the works he composed during that time. The increasingly interconnected nature of musicology and ethnomusicology has led to a more thorough understanding of the importance of both history *and* place, allowing us to view Eisler's work in Hollywood not only as a product of the circumstances that forced his exile, but also a product of the place he settled for the duration of that exile. As Bohlman and Bohlman succinctly observe, "Hollywood is both a theme, or *topos*, in the songbook and a reality in Eisler's life in exile." (Bohlman and Bohlman, 21) Just as Brecht and countless other artistic exiles faced the difficulties of exile, Eisler, too, "was shaped by the exigencies of wartime, his status as an enemy alien, linguistic barriers, and financial crises." (Calico, 76).

poetry. Over the course of his six years in Hollywood, Eisler channeled his conflicting feelings of being in exile into his music, expressing it most effectively in the settings of lyric poetry that became the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. In April, 1958, he described its genesis to Hans Bunge:

At the time I was really writing – I dropped the title, by the way – a ‘Hollywood Songbook.’ That is, I was writing at least one song almost every day – and sometimes more – either to a text by Brecht or by Hölderlin (naturally, I set a lot of Hölderlin) or other things, for example by Pascal. And on a large file I wrote: ‘Hollywood Songbook’ – or ‘Hollywood Diary’ (I can’t remember which) – and said “This is how I will pass the time; this is what I will do alongside my work.” For I wrote many very different things in Hollywood, especially orchestral works. And it wasn’t meant to be modest either, as I was aware that song cycles can play an enormous role in music history.<sup>27</sup>

If the recent surge in interest is any indication of the collection’s significance, his lack of modesty is understandable; the *Hollywood Liederbuch* not only effectively captures the era of its creation, but also provides a window into Eisler’s very personal memories, sorrows, disappointments, and hopes. Working on the *Hollywood Liederbuch* allowed him to retreat from the world and reflect on – or occasionally despair in – his life in Hollywood and his hopes for the future of Germany. Such retreat in the midst of war, Betz suggests, “requires some justification to be working on songs which have as their theme one’s own existence, one’s hope and one’s memories.”<sup>28</sup> Brecht, too, felt such reflection demanded a level of disengagement from the messy discourse of everyday life. He saw lyric art as a retreat and escape from the real world, noting in his working journal,

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27 Hans Bunge, “Fragen Sie mehr über Brecht”: *Hanns Eisler im Gespräch*, (Munich: Rogner & Bernhard, 1970), 43.

28 Betz, 185.

“To work lyrically here [in Hollywood], even if relating to the present, means retreating into one’s ivory tower. It is as if one were working in gold filigree. There is something eccentric, grumpy, narrow-minded about it. Such lyricism is a message in a bottle.”<sup>29</sup>

While Eisler’s setting of lyric poetry – Brecht, Hölderlin, Anacreon, and others – arises out of his retreat and escape from everyday life, many of the songs in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, while not overtly political, still imply a desire for engagement, for enacting a change in the world.

The *Hollywood Liederbuch* was planned as a song-collection (also titled *The Little Hollywood Songbook*) rather than as a large cycle on the scale of Schubert’s *Winterreise* or Schumann’s *Liederkreis*, Op 39. There are forty-seven songs in all, expressing the horrors and misery of war, the hopes and sorrow of emigrants, and the complicated environment of Hollywood. In addition to the Brecht poems that make up the majority of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, there are texts from Hölderlin, Anacreon, Goethe, Pascal, Rimbaud, Eichendorff, Berthold Viertel, and the Bible. Within the larger collection there are three relatively closed cycles: Brecht’s *Fünf Elegien* (*Five Elegies*), the five songs of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, and the six songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*. Eisler began work on the *Hollywood Liederbuch* in May 1942 with the setting of three selections from Brecht’s *Steffinscher Sammlung*, a collection of poems written during Brecht’s exile in Scandinavia: “Der Sohn” (“The Son”), “In den Weiden” (“In the willows”), and “An den kleinen Radioapparat” (“To the little radio”). He continued setting Brecht’s poetry, composing twenty more songs to Brecht texts by the middle of September 1942, including the haunting “Über den Selbstmord” (“On

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29 Bertolt Brecht, *Arbeitsjournal: Erster Band 1938 bis 1942*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1973), 406.

suicide”), which quotes the opening melodic line of Schubert’s *Winterreise*; the violent “Panzerschlacht” (“Tank battle”) that recounts the horrors of war; and the *Fünf Elegien* (*Five Elegies*) that express Brecht’s and Eisler’s cynicism towards life in Hollywood. In the fourth of the *Elegies*, Brecht writes, “This city has taught me that paradise and hell can be in one city. For the poor paradise *is* hell.”<sup>30</sup> Writing in his journal in June 1942, Brecht noted, “Eisler has set most of the Finnish poems to music in a HOLLYWOOD SONGBOOK. He sang them to [Clifford] Odets, who said: ‘that’s the kind of thing you can only do when you’re poor.’”<sup>31</sup>

After focusing on the city of his exile the *Fünf Elegien*, Eisler’s mind turned toward the cities and landscapes of his past. Horst Weber writes that, “Brecht’s *Elegies*... mark a definite turning point. Eisler allowed himself to think about his homeland with increasing frequency – not as a place of horrors, rather one of longing.”<sup>32</sup> In the spring of 1943, after setting twenty-three Brecht texts and two by Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), which initially bore the title “Zwei Inschriften für Arbeiterkneipen” (“Two Inscriptions for Workers’ Pubs”), Eisler turned to two poets that, on the surface, had very little in common with Brecht or his poetry: the fifth-century BC Greek poet Anacreon; and the late eighteenth-/early nineteenth-century German Romantic poet Friedrich Hölderlin. Despite sharing few obvious textual characteristics with the Brecht settings that preceded them, the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* fit both musically and thematically within the larger context of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. Eisler continued to set other texts while working on the Anacreon and Hölderlin fragment cycles, setting

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30 Hanns Eisler, *Fünf Elegien*, Nr. 4 “Diese Stadt hat mich belehrt,” from the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 2008), 43.

31 Bertolt Brecht, *Journals: 1934-1955*, translated by Hugh Rorrison, (New York: Routledge, 1993), 243.

32 Horst Weber, “*I am not a hero, I am composer*”: *Hanns Eisler in Hollywood*, (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2012), 285.



three more Brecht poems, one by his friend Berthold Viertel (1885-1953), one from French author Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891), one stanza of a Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857) poem, and a montage of verses from the Old Testament for the song “Der Mensch.” By the end of 1943 the *Hollywood Liederbuch* consisted of forty-four songs. This was Eisler’s last significantly productive period of composition for the *Hollywood Liederbuch*.

As his song output decreased, other work increased, most notably in the area of film scoring. Between 1943 and 1947 he wrote scores for eight films: *Hangmen Also Die* (1943), *None But the Lonely Heart* (1944), *Jealousy* (1945), *The Spanish Main* (1945), *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), *A Scandal in Paris* (1946), *The Woman on the Beach* (1947), and *So Well Remembered* (1947). He also collaborated with Brecht on a number of projects, including music for the plays *Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches* (*Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*, 1945) and *Leben des Galilei* (*The Life of Galileo*, 1947), which was also made into a short film. Eisler returned to the *Hollywood Liederbuch* very little during this time; he composed only three more songs between 1944 and 1947: one to a text by Goethe, one more by Brecht, and one he penned himself in the wake of his 1947 hearings before the House Un-American Activities Committee. This final piece, originally titled “The Hearing (a nightmare)” and revised to just “Nightmare,” is suggestive of the harsh interrogation to which he was subjected during the hearings.<sup>33</sup> Realizing that he could no longer remain in the United States, Eisler left for Europe before deportation proceedings were concluded. Standing at La Guardia International Airport in

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<sup>33</sup> Oliver Dahin and Peter Deeg, from the Notes to Eisler’s *Hollywood Liederbuch*, 100.

New York, Eisler read a statement expressing his sadness and frustration over being forced to leave. He said,

I leave this country not without bitterness and infuriation. I could well understand it when in 1933 the Hitler bandits put a price on my head and drove me out. They were the evil of the period; I was proud of being driven out. But I feel heartbroken over being driven out of this beautiful country in this ridiculous way. [...] My trouble started when I was subpoenaed [...] by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. [...] As an old anti-Fascist it became plain to me that these men represent fascism in its most direct form. That they represent ignorance and barbarism, which could lead to a new war. [...] A composer knows that music is written by human beings for human beings and that music is a continuation of life, not something separated from it. And I had to defend music. [...] Now I am forced to leave. But I take with me the image of the real American people whom I love.<sup>34</sup>

Perhaps Eisler's intense disappointment and disillusionment at the way he was treated in the United States contributed to his decision to dismantle the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, opting instead to publish the songs in small groups during the 1950s. Thus, the forty-seven songs of the *Hollywood Liederbuch* were not understood to be a distinct, cohesive work until the 1976 publication of the *Collected Works of Hanns Eisler*, when it was first presented as a unified collection of songs. The first complete performance did not take place until 1982, twenty years after Eisler's death.

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<sup>34</sup> Hanns Eisler, "[Statement]," *Musik und Politik: Schriften 1924-1948*, ed. Günter Mayer (München: Rogner & Bernhard, 1973), 529-530.

## TEXT ADAPTATION AND SETTING: THE FRAGMENT CYCLES

*“For me [Eisler’s] settings are like a reading for a play: the text.  
He reads with enormous precision.”<sup>35</sup>*

- Bertolt Brecht

Eisler set an extremely wide variety of texts throughout his career, from Christian Morgenstern in the *Galgenlieder* (1919) to Hölderlin in the *Ernste Gesänge* (1962). He set newspaper headlines; numerous texts by Brecht, both in songs and in larger works; poems by canonical writers like Goethe, Hölderlin, and Shakespeare; and fragments of poetry that he constructed from other writers’ works. His early works display an understandably strong Schoenbergian influence in their solid design and dense content.<sup>36</sup> But after his first few years composing vocal music, Eisler wrote three pieces – *Tagebuch*, Op. 9, *Heine-Chöre*, Op. 10, *Zeitungsausschnitte*, Op. 11 (1926) – that signaled a transition away from the overly ‘poetic’ texts that were still commonplace in avant-garde music of the 1920s. Eisler felt that these poetic texts “hampered the liberating impulses of advanced composition, channeling it into retrogressive paths. They withdrew from reality instead of bearing down on it.”<sup>37</sup> He wanted to make sure that music was not contemplative, a point on which he found agreement with Brecht; in his view, music must force the listener to engage with reality, rather than find escape from it. As Betz observes, “What he felt should be resisted first and foremost was a conception of

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<sup>35</sup> Brecht, *Arbeitsjournal*, 497.

<sup>36</sup> James Wierzbicki, “Hanns Eisler and the FBI,” *Music & Politics*, Vol. II, Issue 2 (Summer 2008), <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0002.202>.

<sup>37</sup> Betz, 45.

music as a ‘comforter’ by which people forced into self-denial could be reconciled with their fate.”<sup>38</sup> He was of the opinion that the modern Lied should speak to contemporary issues not only through the music, but also in the text, and that the choice of text had a direct impact on the kind of music being written. He intentionally distanced himself from romantic subjects, wanting his compositions to be a reaction to his own time.

As Eisler’s political idealism developed, he also began to see text selection as a tool for raising social issues and criticizing political inequality.<sup>39</sup> Text selection and adaptation became an increasingly important part of his compositional process. He became more and more involved with the texts he chose, editing and revising, shortening and updating, to create texts that met his high standards of relevance, brevity, and expressiveness. Betz observes that “In Eisler’s vocal music, his focus was to intensify the clarity of a text in such a way that its meaning – especially when it operates on different levels – is unmistakable, leading to a unification of sensual and intellectual enjoyment.”<sup>40</sup>

Out of the many authors Eisler set during his lifetime, one stands out as the most influential and important: Bertolt Brecht. The two men saw eye-to-eye on many issues regarding text and music (influenced, perhaps, by their shared political ideals), and viewed their collaborative relationship as an essential part of their own individual artistry. Eisler set Brecht’s texts in solo songs, choral works, cantatas, and even in his *Deutsche Sinfonie*, Op. 50. Both men wound up in Hollywood after fleeing Europe, and rekindled their collaborative work that had been disrupted by years of travel. Brecht’s poetry, particularly that of the *Steffinische Sammlung*, resonated with Eisler’s own exile

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>39</sup> Friedericke Wißmann, *Hanns Eisler: Komponist. Weltbürger. Revolutionär*, (Munich: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 2012), 65.

<sup>40</sup> Betz, 30.

experience and inspired him to compose pieces for the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. As noted earlier, these initial settings inspired the composition of more songs, many of which were settings of poets other than Brecht. In one of his many conversations with Hans Bunge, Eisler recalled,

Brecht was completely astounded that, in such difficult living conditions, I continuously set his poems and composed orchestral pieces – and then I surprised him with settings of Anacreon. Brecht was not keen on this at all. Of the Hölderlin settings, as well, but he put up with it. It stunned Brecht that I would suddenly choose to set Anacreon. Now, Brecht was a very generous man. He, understandably, preferred it when I set his poems. [...] he found it astounding that in 1943, amidst the commotion and confusion of a terrible war, I could seclude myself to spend several days composing Anacreon. I myself am surprised that I did it. I read through the old manuscripts with pure delight. I have no idea what drove me to read them.

Now, Anacreon is well known as a [...] poet who described the pleasures of everyday life. Curiously, from those wonderful adaptations by Mörike I selected Anacreon poems which had nothing at all to do with that. I also partly adapted<sup>41</sup> them myself. That pleased Brecht immensely. [...] The way I interpreted Anacreon resulted in a vicious disfigurement, one that would horrify any professor of Greek.<sup>42</sup>

Although Eisler was unable to articulate his reasons for setting Anacreon, there are some interesting connections between Anacreon, Mörike, and Hölderlin, in terms of rhythm and meter, which may have attracted the attention of a composer like Eisler. Christopher Middleton discusses the connection between the German Romantic poets, Hölderlin and Mörike in particular, and their connection to ancient Greece, noting,

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41 Here Eisler uses the word “umgedichtet” – “repoeticized”

42 Bunge, 66-67.

Both, [Hölderlin and Mörike] too, are poets of the pastoral tradition going back to Greek prototypes; and often their metrics are, oddest of all, Greco-Alemannic. It is as if some spirit, which moves and speaks in rhythms, had floated from its older Mediterranean moorings to settle for a time in the surround of small towns, hills, rivers, and breezy woodlands, the crumpled green terrain which was the Swabia known to Hölderlin and Mörike two thousand years later.<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps that same spirit floated from its mid-nineteenth-century moorings in Swabia to Eisler's Hollywood home one hundred years later.

Despite his initial shock, Brecht was extremely pleased with the final product of both groups, writing on June 25, 1943, that Eisler had "written two excellent cycles for his *Little Hollywood Songbook*, Anacreon poems and Hölderlin poems."<sup>44</sup> Brecht praised the way the Eisler had 'deplasterd' ("entgipst") Hölderlin, referring not only to his literal disassembly and rearrangement of Hölderlin's poems, but also perhaps to the way Eisler had, through his adaptation and modernization, taken the revered icon of Hölderlin 'down off the shelf' to make it more familiar and accessible. To Bunge's question regarding the principles behind this kind of text arrangement, Eisler answered: "The curious thing is: there are no principles. It is not a scientific method, but an artistic one. That is, you read a poem and try – without falling into barbarisms – to summarize what seems important in it today."<sup>45</sup>

It is Eisler's ability to distill issues that are important to contemporary and modern (twenty-first-century) audiences that makes the *Anakreontische* and *Hölderlin-*

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43 Christopher Middleton, from the introduction to *[Friedrich Hölderlin and Eduard Mörike] Selected Poems*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), xi.

44 Brecht, *Journals*, 280.

45 Bunge, 232.

*Fragmente* so unique among the songs of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. His ability to read a poem and distill its truth, its essence, as it pertained to contemporary society, was so keen that Brecht considered Eisler's comments and settings part of his own creative process. When Eisler undertakes the task of adapting Hölderlin or creating montages of Anacreon, he becomes composer *and* poet, using the words of Anacreon and Hölderlin as the lenses through which he views his own exile. The adaptations do more than just provide a glimpse of Eisler's inner turmoil; they also serve as a counterbalance to the other closed cycle in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, Brecht's *Fünf Elegien*. If the *Elegien* are "descriptions of paradise as hell and an expression of non-identification with his own situation, the fragment cycles frequently express the sorrow and bitterness of separation from and longing for home."<sup>46</sup> They also express the multifaceted and often tenuous nature of the exile's relationship with hope, whether struggling to find it, lamenting its absence, or scoffing at those who cling to it.

In the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, both the adaptation of the poetic texts and Eisler's musical language help to convey the experience of his political and artistic exile. While I do not have the space to characterize the wide range of Eisler's musical style, or even the overall style of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, a brief discussion of general features of these two song cycles assists in providing some context and demonstrates shared features that will be explored in greater detail in the analysis of the individual songs. The musical language of the fragment cycles combines the musical gestures of late Romanticism with the brevity and severity Modernism. It draws on the avant-garde techniques of his Viennese training and melds them with his desire to make

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<sup>46</sup> Betz, 191.

music understandable, resulting in a complex harmonic language that is uniquely Eisler, full of allusions to tonality without the realization of those allusions. Had Eisler taken this notion of tonality to its conclusion, these pieces would be more in the vein of early Schoenberg or Webern vocal works.

As with the texts, however, Eisler's approach to the harmonic language is one of fragmentation, fragmentation through tonal destabilization and lack of resolution. He uses tonal allusions and their subsequent destabilization to show us that uncertainty and instability are at the root of the exile experience; the cultural reference of tonality allows the listener to understand the fragmentation and see it as commentary on Eisler's state of mind in 1943. He uses triadic material, both chordally and melodically, fully aware, as a student of Schoenberg and preeminent avant-garde composer, that triads are complicated and come with significant (musical) historical baggage. Each song is constructed around a central sonority rather than a tonal center, providing an element of familiarity and unity without the confines of tonality. Eisler crafts the voice leading in such a way that the harmonic movement always feels organic; even in the most dissonant atonal songs ("Die Unwürde des Alterns" from the *Anakreontische Fragmente* or "An die Hoffnung" from the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, for example), there are few, if any, harmonic moments that seem to come out of the blue. Occurring simultaneously with the allusions to tonality is an awareness of serialism, or at least of the chromatic aggregate, suggested by the way Eisler fills in chromatic spaces between primary melodic pitches as well as between harmonies structured around each piece's central sonority.<sup>47</sup> This filling-in, or awareness of the chromatic aggregate, reflects ideas Eisler introduced in "The handling of

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<sup>47</sup> Perhaps a close examination of the music using Allen Forte's analytical approach might reveal hidden serialism in these songs, but that is not the aim of this inquiry.



consonance in twelve-tone technique,” and most often takes the form of descending chromatic lines – the basic lament figure – occurring throughout both cycles.

Despite the smooth part writing and frequent consonant sonorities, the songs of both cycles create an underlying sense of unease in the listener. Sally Bick, while writing on the musical effect of Eisler’s film score for *Hangmen Also Die*, makes astute observations that are applicable to the *Anakreontische* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*. She notes, “The music elicits a sense of surprise, perhaps for some audience members even estrangement, because it discourages them from identification through its lack of resolution and tonal center. Eisler described these new musical resources as having the potential to establish ‘a sense of fear, of looming danger and catastrophe...,’<sup>48</sup> all of which are appropriate responses to the themes of the fragment cycles.

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48 Sally Bick, “A Double Life in Hollywood: Hanns Eisler’s Score for the Film *Hangmen also Die* and the Covert Expressions of a Marxist Composer,” *Musical Quarterly* (2010) 93 (1): 90-143, doi:10.1093/musqtl/gdp026, p. 116.

## Chapter 2:        *The Anakreontische Fragmente*

*“It occurs to me now, for the first time – after twenty or twenty-five years – what an astounding event it is, when political refugees set Anacreon to music. One must look back through my second, fourth, and fifth volumes – also in the first volume of my Collected Works – at what I composed then. They [the Anacreon Fragments] are some of the bitterest songs that I have written – from this well-known lyric aesthete.”*<sup>49</sup>

- Hanns Eisler

### LAYERS OF ADAPTATION: ANACREON AND MÖRIKE

The *Anakreontische Fragmente* consists of five songs, written in April, 1943: I. “Geselligkeit betreffend,” II. [Dir auch wurde Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich], III. “Die Unwürde des Alterns,” IV. “Später Triumph,” and V. “In der Frühe”.<sup>50</sup> They are all settings of poetic fragments by the ancient Greek poet, Anacreon, translated into German by Romantic poet Eduard Mörike. Out of the forty-seven songs in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, the Anacreon songs are the second-largest group, behind the six songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*. In contrast to Hölderlin, it is not Anacreon’s great poetic skill that inspired Eisler’s settings; rather, it is his ability to accurately depict the experience of the

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<sup>49</sup> Bunge, 67.

<sup>50</sup> The autograph copies of the first two songs, “Geselligkeit betreffend” and “[Dir auch wurde Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich]” are not dated, but as Eisler spoke of setting the Anacreon songs as a group, it is most likely that they were composed during the same time as the other three songs, written between April 2, and April 18, 1943. “[Dir auch wurde...]” is the only song that was not given a title, which is why its opening line of text is used as a title in brackets.

exile that resonated with Eisler and prompted him to include them in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*.<sup>51</sup>

Anacreon (ca. 570 BC – ca. 485 BC) was a Greek lyric poet, best known for his drinking songs and poems concerning the pleasures of everyday life. He primarily wrote of love, carnal pleasures, food, and drink, rather than more serious subject matter. But he, like Eisler, spent a significant portion of his life as an exile, fleeing his hometown ca. 545 BC under threat of invasion and war. He spent many years in Samos as the resident poet, tutor, and confidant of the tyrant Polycrates, and flourished in court life. Upon the death of Polycrates, he was summoned to Athens by Hipparchus and remained there until Hipparchus' assassination in 514 BC. He then traveled for a number of years, returning either to Athens or to his hometown of Teos (it is not certain which), and died in 485 BC.<sup>52</sup> In the six or so centuries after his death, many anonymous poets wrote in the style of Anacreon, the product of which was assembled in what is now known as the *Anacreontea*. Collected in a tenth-century manuscript and first published in 1554, these works were ultimately deemed to be falsely attributed to Anacreon, greatly decreasing the amount of extant poetry actually believed to have been penned by Anacreon. The texts that remain are fragments of Anacreon's lyric poetry taken from the collection assembled by Aristarchus of Samothrace around 153 BC.<sup>53</sup>

Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), like many other Romantic poets (including Goethe and Hölderlin) was fascinated with ancient Greece and its culture. His fluency in classical languages equipped him with the tools to create new translations of Greek texts, updating

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51 Manfred Grabs, from the afterword to *Hanns Eisler, Ausgewählte Lieder I*, (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972), 31.

52 Michael Schmidt, *The First Poets: Lives of the Ancient Greek Poets*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 226.

53 *Ibid.*, 229.

them to suit mid-nineteenth-century language and tastes. The fragments of Anacreon existed in earlier German translations, but Mörike was drawn to them for the same reason Eisler was: the directness of their expression. In the introduction to *Friedrich Hölderlin and Eduard Mörike: Selected Poems*, translator and scholar Christopher Middleton notes, “A master of condensation, [Mörike] is deepest when he senses the universe as an organism living by measure, as a matter of proportion, modulating itself in the subtlest perceptions and the tiniest of forms.”<sup>54</sup> Eisler, too, saw the power of the slightest shift, of subtle modulation, using the smallest of textual changes to dramatically alter the interpretation of the text.<sup>55</sup>

By the spring of 1943, Eisler had been in Hollywood for one year and had already set a number of Brecht songs for the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. Professional and personal worries troubled him - he was still cultivating relationships in the film industry, and as a result work was not yet steady; the state of the war in Europe was also extremely uncertain, which contributed to his deepest feelings to date of bitterness and despair. The longing for home, uncertainty about the future of the homeland, and the instability of life on foreign soil are all present in Anacreon’s fragments. The parallels to Eisler’s own life were obvious, but he felt compelled to update and refine the texts, making them more accessible and relevant for contemporary listeners who might be unfamiliar with life in ancient Greece. He did this not only through selective cutting of text and updating of Mörike’s antiquated German, but also by combining multiple fragments into montage texts that better suited his aesthetic and emotional aims. Since most of the texts are

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<sup>54</sup> Middleton, xii.

<sup>55</sup> Throughout this examination it is important to remember that Eisler’s adaptations are based on Mörike’s translation of the ancient Greek texts. Therefore, all of my discussion here takes Mörike’s translation as the starting point, rather than the original Greek text, as I do not read ancient Greek and the English translations vary widely.

relatively short, due to their already fragmented nature, Eisler did not have to remove large quantities of text to match the brevity of the Brechtian model.<sup>56</sup> On the topic of Anacreon's brevity, Michael Schmidt writes,

Though he is profligate of loves, Anacreon is not profligate with language. There is a generally direct, colloquial quality to his diction, a precise economy of image. [...] Set beside the abundance of Apollonius, for example, where the sheer amount of language far outweighs the occasion, Anacreon's thrift is exemplary.<sup>57</sup>

Even within Anacreon's thrift, Eisler was able to identify aspects of the text originally in the background, that hinted at the difficulties of exile. These secondary elements of the fragments strengthened Eisler's view that Anacreon was, first and foremost, an exile. His adaptations bring these elements to the forefront, thereby linking seemingly disparate texts to each other and to the rest of the *Hollywood Liederbuch* through the common theme of exile.

My analytical approach to the *Anakreontische Fragmente* begins with the text, organizing the discussion on the degree of text adaptation rather than chronological or numerical order. The poetic fragments Mörike translated provided Eisler with multiple possibilities for adaptation: word changes, omissions, additions, and combinations of multiple fragments to create montage texts. Some of the fragments are sufficiently short and succinct in their original forms, leaving Eisler to make only minor changes – updating vocabulary or smoothing the phonetic contour of a phrase, as in “Die Unwürde des Alterns” and [Dir auch wurde Sehnsucht nach der Heimat].

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<sup>56</sup> In contrast to Anacreon's brevity and therefore Eisler's fairly minimal cutting, the Hölderlin-Fragmente seem to be an exercise primarily in cutting material from multi-page poems, where Eisler uses only a fraction of the stanzas written.

<sup>57</sup> Michael Schmidt, *The First Poets*, 224.

## SMALL CHANGES: “DIE UNWÜRDE DES ALTERNS” AND [“DIR AUCH WURDE SEHNSUCHT NACH DER HEIMAT TÖDLICH”]

The alterations made to No. II [Dir auch wurde Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich] (“*For you, too, the longing for home was deadly*”) and No. III “Die Unwürde des Alterns” (“*The Indignity of Aging*”) illustrate how even minor text changes can shape the musical setting. They represent the full range of musical and emotional expression present in the *Anakreontische Fragmente*; where [Dir auch wurde...] lamentingly warns of the danger of prolonged longing and hope, “Die Unwürde des Alterns” is entirely devoid of hope, angrily focusing instead on ignominy of old age, the inevitability of death, and the horrors of the afterlife. This fragment does not have an overt connection to the exile experience, but the bitterness that pervades its lines mirrors, at least a little bit, the darker side of Eisler’s inner turmoil. The economy of words and rich imagery of “Die Unwürde des Alterns” allow Eisler to effectively use rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic elements – ones that occur throughout the Anacreon cycle – to reinforce the bitterness, cynicism, and longing of Anacreon’s poetry. The fragment Eisler chose for “Die Unwürde des Alterns,” (Mörike’s Fragment 37) fits with his proclivity for direct, succinct expression, similar in size and scope to the Brecht poems of the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. He makes no cuts to the text, changing only two words in the middle stanza to update the language and create a more singable phonetic line for the vocalist.

**No. 37 (Anakreon/Mörike)<sup>58</sup>**

Grau bereits sind meine Schläfe,  
und das Haupt ist weiß geworden,  
Hin, dahin die holde Jugend;  
schon gealtert sind die Zähne.

Von dem süßen Leben ist mir nur  
ein Restchen Zeit noch übrig.  
Oft mit Thränen dieß bejammt' ich,  
vor dem Tartaros erbebend.

Denn entsetzlich ist des Hades Tiefe,  
leidvoll seine Straße,  
Offen stets der Stieg, hinunter,  
nimmermehr herauf zu gehen.

**III. Die Unwürde des Alterns (Eisler)**

Grau bereits sind meine Schläfen,  
und das Haupt ist weiß geworden,  
Hin, dahin die holde Jugend;  
schon gealtert sind die Zähne.

Von dem süßen Leben ist mir nur  
ein Restchen Zeit geblieben.  
Oft mit Tränen dies bedaur' ich,  
vor dem Tartaros erbebend.

Denn entsetzlich ist des Hades Tiefe,  
leidvoll seine Straße,  
Offen stets der Stieg, hinunter,  
nimmermehr herauf zu gehen.

The song begins with the description of youth's fleeing sweetness as temples grey, hair turns white, and teeth fall out. The speaker then notes the nearness of death, saying, "Von dem süßen Leben ist mir nur ein Restchen Zeit geblieben." ("Of sweet life only a tiny bit remains."), which, in turn, forces him to think about what awaits him in the afterlife. Despite Eisler's tendency to remove mythological references to make texts contemporarily relevant, his version of this fragment retains two references to the Greek underworld: the speaker, in anticipation of his impending death, shudders at the thought of Tartarus,<sup>59</sup> and laments the looming depths of Hades. And there ends the song – no resolution, no comforting of the old man's fears or failing health.

"Die Unwürde des Alterns" shares this lack of resolution with all of the songs in the *Anakreontische Fragmente*; it is one of the ways in which Eisler expresses the bitterness throughout the cycle. What makes this song stand out among the other four is

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58 All of the text examples show the original version on the left and Eisler's adaptation on the right. Eisler's changes are indicated in the following ways: cuts to the original text are in brackets; additions, replacements, and changes in word order are underlined. Please refer to Appendix I and II for complete side-by-side comparison of all the Anacreon and Hölderlin texts.

59 Tartarus is the dark abyss in which Zeus imprisoned the Titans. In *The Iliad*, Homer describes Tartarus as "the deepest gulf beneath the earth, ...as far beneath Hades as heaven is above earth." (Homer, *The Iliad*, translated by A. T. Murray, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924, p. 351).

its formal structure; whereas the other songs in the cycle are through-composed, “Die Unwürde des Alterns” achieves a structural balance through the identical prelude and postlude, and nearly identical first and third stanzas, fitting the model of ABCBA arch form. The prelude (mm. 1-5) and postlude (mm. 29-33) form the A sections, stanzas one (mm. 6-13) and three (mm. 21-28) form the B sections, and stanza two (mm. 14-20) forms section C. When the vocal line is placed in a higher tessitura in stanza three to intensify the declamation of “Denn entsetzlich ist des Hades Tiefe, leidvoll seine Straße.” (*“For terrible are the depths of Hades, sorrowful its avenues.”*), the melodic material from stanza one appears in the right hand of the piano, establishing it as a clear restatement of the B material. The ensuing vocal line then serves as a kind of descant counterpoint to the original melodic line.

A composer in a different time and place might have interpreted this text as a more melancholy lament, full of sadness and resignation, accepting of the inevitability of aging and death. Eisler takes the opposite approach, as is evident by the title, painting the picture of a man full of bitterness and anger at “the indignity of aging.” He accentuates the bitterness of the text and creates a sense of unease in the listener by establishing expectations of tonal harmonic movement, through well-crafted part writing and careful treatment of dissonances, and then deviating from those conventions. He also utilizes strong rhythmic figures in both the voice and piano to underscore the old man’s hostility: dotted rhythms in both parts, and the relentless syncopated rhythmic motive in the piano (Example 2.1), a motive that appears throughout the *Anakreontische* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*.





**Example 2.1 - "Die Unwürde des Alterns" mm. 21-24**

The piano introduces harmonic and rhythmic instability in the first measure of the prelude (Example 2.2), which contains tritones in every measure and is driven by the pervasive syncopated rhythmic motive that appears throughout both fragment cycles. As the postlude is identical to the prelude and provides neither rhythmic nor harmonic resolution, the listener is left with the same instability that began the piece.



**Example 2.2 - "Die Unwürde des Alterns" mm. 1-5**

When the piano assumes a purely accompanimental role beginning in m. 6, it continues the instability of the prelude by repeating the dissonances and syncopation through all three stanzas of text, relentlessly pushing forward, feeding the anger and fear of the old man. Despite the strong atonal harmonic language of "Die Unwürde des Alterns," the treatment of the dissonances – and there are many, with either seconds, tritones, or sevenths in every sonority – still hints at the possibility of tonal harmonic resolution

through the “resolution” of suspensions, and bass line movement that hints at tonal chord progressions – the cadence in m. 5, due to the movement of the bass line, feels strongly like a dominant chord. It is this allusion to tonality that Eisler uses to set the listener on edge. He disrupts the expectation of resolution, moving fluidly from one dissonant sonority to another by means of carefully crafted voice leading, without ever arriving at the anticipated consonance. Harmonic elements that can be interpreted as suspensions and appoggiaturas are resolved according to traditional rules of voice leading, but the remaining dissonant harmonies of any given chord (the final measure of the prelude/postlude seen above, for example) never provide the listener – or the old man – with the resolution for which they so desperately yearn.

The second song in the cycle, [Dir auch wurde Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich (“*For you, too, the longing for home was deadly*”), grapples with themes of longing and homesickness, and introduces the critical word “Heimat” (“*home*” or “*homeland*”) to Eisler’s exile vocabulary. It provides emotional and musical contrast to the harsh cynicism of songs I, III, and IV through slow, quiet, and lyrical writing. Just as the sharp musical elements of “Die Unwürde des Alterns” recur in the other cynically bitter pieces, the more subdued elements of [Dir auch wurde...] return to express the longing for home in the final piece of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, “In der Frühe.” The text of [Dir auch wurde...] is not as acerbic as Nos. I, III, and IV, but its bitterness is still present, expressed as weariness and resignation that is tied to an awareness of the danger of wasting one’s life longing for a return that may never come.

The text of [Dir auch wurde...], like “Die Unwürde des Alterns,” contains just two alterations. Due to its themes of homesickness and longing, as well as its succinct

nature, the original fragment fit so well within the *Hollywood Liederbuch* that Eisler was able to leave the majority of it intact.

**No. 54 (Anakreon/Mörike)**

Dir auch wurde, Kleanorides,  
Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich;  
dich schreckte der Süd nimmer,  
der winterlich stürmt.  
So fing dich die betrügliche Jahreszeit ein,  
und strömend spülten die Wogen  
den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinweg.

**II. Dir auch wurde...(Eisler)**

*Dir auch wurde [...]  
Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich.  
Dich schreckte der Süd nimmer,  
der winterlich stürmt.  
So fing dich die betrügliche Jahreszeit ein,  
und strömend spülten die Wogen  
den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinab.*

In the first line, Eisler removes the name Kleanorides. The second and more significant change alters the final word of the last line, “hinweg” (“away”), replacing it with the word “hinab,” which also means away, but implies a downward movement as well. This word choice colors the text to reflect the weariness and disillusionment felt by the exile. Instead of waves washing the charms of youth away (“Und strömend/Spülten die Wogen den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinweg”), which seems bad enough, Eisler has waves wash the charms of youth down (“Und strömend spülten die Wogen den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinab.”), down to the bottom of nothingness, to death, Hades, or something worse than Hades – Tartarus, perhaps. Also, from a purely vocal standpoint, the [a] vowel in “hinab” [hIn ap] assists the performer in creating the sigh effect of the last two notes of the vocal line. Continuous descending figures in both the voice and piano allude not only to the final word change, but also to the depiction of longing for home as a musical lament. The descending right hand octaves underneath the final phrase (mm. 10-13) paint the delivery of the word “hinab”; on a much larger scale, though, the bass line moves down stepwise from its entrance in m. 2 all the way to m. 11 – just a few

measures shy of the entire piece (Example 2.3) – recalling elements of the famous Purcell aria “When I am laid in earth” from *Dido and Aeneas*.



Example 2.3 - No. III [Dir auch wurde] descending bass line in piano chord progression, mm. 1-15

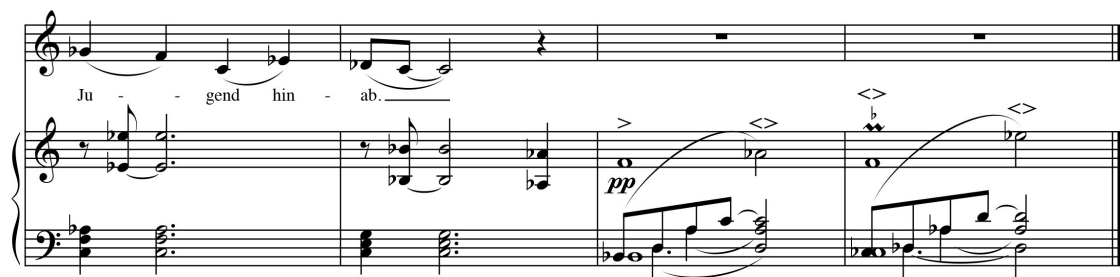
It is not only the piano part that contains the descending lament figure; the vocal phrases, even when skipping up and down, have an underlying lament motive sustained through the lower pitches, best observed in mm. 4-7 at “Dich schreckte der Süd nimmer, der winterlich stürmt.” (Example 2.4).



Example 2.4 - No. III [Dir auch wurde...] descending chromatic line in vocal part, mm. 4-7

This vocal phrase demonstrates not only the lament motive, but also the destabilizing syncopated figures that create rhythmic imbalance throughout the *Anakreontische Fragmente*. In “Die Unwürde des Alterns” and “Später Triumph” the syncopated motive (see above in Example 2.1) is used in a relentless manner, meant to wear the listener down by never settling into the main beats; in [Dir auch wurde...], the syncopation appears in the vocal line to disrupt phrasal expectations and to draw attention to the words that are *not* set to syncopated rhythms, particularly “Heimat.” The vocal line

begins *a capella* on an offbeat, with syncopated rhythms on “wurde” and “tödlich.” But “Heimat” is set to an even quarter note rhythm; it also happens to be the highest note of the vocal line as well as a rare moment of triadic consonance among a sea of whole-tone-based sonorities. While the title and text make it clear that the subject’s (whoever it is being referred to with the informal “you”) longing for home was not satisfied, Eisler reinforces the point in the open-ended postlude (Example 2.5), giving the listener no satisfaction of resolution.



Example 2.5 - [Dir auch wurde...] ending, mm. 12-15

The two final ascending arpeggios float off unresolved, leaving the implied harmonic direction of mm. 10-13 literally up in the air with the right hand’s upward leap to E-flat.

#### MONTAGE TEXTS: “GESELLIGKEIT BETREFFEND” AND “IN DER FRÜHE”

The text for I. “Geselligkeit betreffend” (“*Regarding companionship*”), uses Eisler’s montage method of adaptation, piecing together three fragments from Anacreon’s elegies (Nos. 38, 39, and 40) that on their own, have little or no connection to

the experience of exile. When combined, though, these texts speak directly to Eisler's own exile. In the three seemingly unrelated fragments, Anacreon writes of companionship and drinking conversation, of dwindling love for a Thracian woman, and of being a wine drinker. Eisler takes these fragments, and, with a few word additions, connects them to form a text that increases the overall sense of bitterness. In other words, the bitterness of the whole is significantly greater than the bitterness of the individual fragments.

**From the Elegies - Nos. 38, 39, & 40  
(Anakreon/Mörike)**

[38] Der sei nicht mein Genoß,  
der mir zum Weine beim vollen  
Becher vom Fehden erzählt  
und von dem leidigen Krieg;  
Vielmehr der in geselligem Frohsinn  
gerne der Musen  
Und Aphrodites holdseliger Gaben gedenkt.  
[39] Nicht nach der Thrakerin mehr neigt sich  
verlangend mein Herz.  
[40] Zum Weintrinker gemacht bin ich.

***I. Geselligkeit betreffend (Eisler)***

*Der sei nicht mein Genoß,  
der mir zum Wein beim vollen  
Becher nicht vom Fehden erzählt  
und nicht vom leidigen Krieg;  
Sondern vielmehr [...] in geselligem Frohsinn  
schwelgt und gerne von den Musen  
Und Aphrodites holdseligen Gaben mir schwätzt.  
Nicht nach der Thrakerin [...] neigt sich  
verlangend mein Herz.  
Denn zum Weintrinker bin ich gemacht.*

The text begins by defining who will *not* be considered a friend, establishing the biting tone in the opening line. The air of negativity is then amplified with Eisler's addition of "nicht" ("not") twice in the first phrase, creating a double negative that complicates the phrase's meaning. Mörike's translation reads,

"Der sei nicht mein Genoß, der mir zum Weine beim vollen/Becher von Fehden erzählt und von dem leidigen Krieg;"

*"He will not be my friend, who over a full glass of wine speaks of feuds and of tiresome war;"*

After the insertions of "nicht," Eisler's line reads,

“Der sei nicht mein Genöß, der mir zum Wein beim vollen Becher **nicht** von  
Fehden erzählt und **nicht** von leidigen Krieg!”

*“He will not be my friend, who over a full glass of wine speaks **not** of feuds and  
**not** of tiresome war!”*

After this opening ultimatum, the speaker says that he would rather talk “of muses and Aphrodite’s lovely gifts.” The double negative in the opening phrase may then imply that even when the conversation attempts to focus on pleasantries, it inevitably will – and should – turn to the more pressing, serious matters of the time, namely feuds and “sorrowful wars.” The mention of conflict in Eisler’s montage reflects the geopolitical turmoil of the 1940s, which again fits with his philosophy of setting texts that speak to contemporary audiences. It is interesting, then, that the text of “Geselligkeit betreffend” contains two references that have little relevance to contemporary listeners. The first reference – the mention of muses and Aphrodite in Fragment 38 – was most likely not at all foreign to educated audiences of the twentieth century, but as none of the other songs of the *Hollywood Liederbuch* make such references, this one stands out. The second reference is much more obscure, making mention of a Thracian<sup>60</sup> woman. Some English translations of Eisler’s song text interpret “Thrakerin” as “*Thracian goddess*,” attempting to make a stronger connection between Fragments 38 and 39. The problem with such translations is that Aphrodite was not a part of Thracian pantheon; therefore making the link between the mention of her at the end of Fragment 38 and the Thracian woman in 39 tenuous at best. However one chooses to interpret this line, Fragment 39 serves primarily as a connection between Fragments 38 and 40, and the resulting textual progression

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<sup>60</sup> The Thracians were a group of individual tribes that inhabited the area north of Greece, what is now Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia. They had a mythology and pantheon separate from those of Greece.

implies that the wars and women have led to the drinking problem and bitterness. This implication comes primarily through Eisler's addition of the word "Denn" ("*for*" or "*as a result of*") at the beginning of Fragment 40, changing Mörike's "Zum Weintrinker gemacht bin ich" ("*I was born a wine drinker*"), to Eisler's "Denn zum Weintrinker bin ich gemacht" ("*For I was born a wine drinker*").

While there is some inherent cynicism and bitterness in this text, it is Eisler's musical setting that creates the overwhelming mordant nature of this piece. He depicts the emotional turmoil through the sharply dissonant atonal chordal accompaniment; strong dotted rhythmic figures; loud dynamics; and a high tessitura in the vocal line. Many of these musical elements appear in the other cynical Anacreon songs (Nr. III "Die Unwürde des Alterns" and Nr. IV "Später Triumph"). The anxiety and uncertainty is apparent in the opening vocal statement: a forte *a capella* entrance starting on a high E-flat and continuing up to G-flat before skipping down a diminished seventh. Eisler repeats this figure note-for-note on the text "nicht von Fehden erzählt" and again on "nicht vom leidigen Krieg," both times with a much larger descending leap, relentlessly pushing the phrase almost to its breaking point, both vocally and emotionally (Example 2.6 and 2.7).



**Example 2.6 - "Geselligkeit betreffend" vocal line, mm. 1-2**





**Example 2.7 - "Geselligkeit betreffend" vocal line, mm. 5-8**

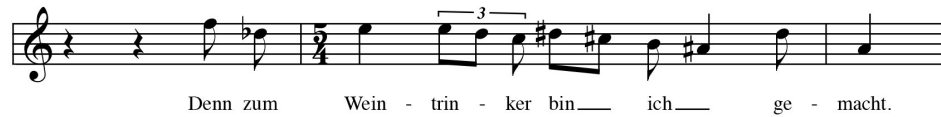
It is not until the more pleasant topics of conversation are mentioned that the tessitura and dynamics come down (m. 11 “sondern, vielmehr...”), and the articulation becomes more legato. Eisler’s instruction at m. 11 is “zurückgehaltend” (“*held back*”), giving both the performers and the listeners a few moments of breathing room before returning to the higher, louder declamation of “Denn zum Weintrinker bin ich gemacht.” This final statement of bitterness is then reinforced by the piano’s three-measure postlude of accented, fortissimo, chromatically ascending eighth- and sixteenth-note chords, with an accented *sforzandissimo* on the final chord.

Eisler employs a number of rhythmic elements that provide an extra layer of agitation. The rhythmic uneasiness is expressed in “Geselligkeit betreffend” through syncopated figures and alternation between duples and triplets. The vocal line alludes to the syncopation motive – the one that plays a prominent role in “Die Unwürde des Alterns” and “Später Triumph” – when the declamation suggests an increased level of bitterness. It first appears in mm. 14-15, when the speaker talks of “prattling on about muses and Aphrodite’s lovely gifts,” (Example 2.8), implying that he really does not want to be talking about such trivial matters as art and beauty when much more serious matters are at hand.



**Example 2.8 - "Geselligkeit betreffend" vocal line, mm. 13-16**

This syncopated figure reappears in m. 24 in the phrase, “Denn zum Weintrinker bin ich gemacht,” where it is combined with alternating duples and triplets (Example 2.9) to express the bitterest line of text in the entire song.



**Example 2.9 - "Geselligkeit betreffend" vocal line, mm. 23-25**

In addition to the syncopation, Eisler plays with rhythmic subdivisions, using duple and triplet subdivisions of the beat to create an uneasiness and instability in the latter half of the piece, conflating the rhythmic instability with the drunkenness of the wine drinker. When duples follow a triplet figure, the contrast creates a militaristic march effect, further unsettling the rhythmic foundation of the piece. The piano postlude takes those strong marching rhythms and accelerates them, ending the piece in a rush of ascending sixteenth notes that lead to an F-major7 chord. (Example 2.10),



**Example 2.10 - "Geselligkeit betreffend" piano postlude, mm. 25-27**

While the ascending progression pushes toward an F chord of some kind, the arrival of the final chord is thwarted by its transposition down an octave, frustrating the listener's expectations and expressing the pent-up anger, bitterness, and frustration of the speaker.

The second montage text, “In der Frühe,” is the final song of the five *Anakreontische Fragmente*, and with it Eisler ends the group with overwhelming sadness and longing. Like “Geselligkeit betreffend,” he combines multiple fragments to create a montage text, using Mörike’s Fragment 7 and Fragment 15. Eisler made very few changes to Mörike’s translation, and on the page, the ones he did make seem rather small – reordering the words of one phrase, cutting one line of text, adding a total of three words. But all of these elements combine to form a text full of loneliness and hopelessness. The two fragments Eisler chose for “In der Frühe” come from opposite ends of Anacreon’s poetic spectrum; fragment seven is in the vein of his earthly-pleasure poetry, as it speaks of drinking wine and playing music to serenade “the most tender young one.” Fragment fifteen, on the other hand, consists of just one line that simply states, “Mein arm heimatlich Land werd’ ich denn wiedersehn” (“My poor homeland, then I will see you again”). By combining a text about drinking and music with one that speaks of longing for one’s homeland, Eisler makes the former a product of the latter, and intensifies that connection with the remaining textual changes.

**Nos. 7 & 15 (Anakreon/Mörike)**

**7**

Vom Dünnkuchen zum Morgenbrot  
 Erst ein Stückchen mir brach ich;  
 Trank auch Wein einen Krug dazu;  
 Und zur zärtlichen Laute  
 Greif’ ich jetzo, dem zartesten  
 Kind ein Ständchen zu bringen.

**15**

Mein arm heimatlich Land werd’ ich denn  
 wiedersehn.

***In der Frühe (Eisler)***

*Vom Dünnkuchen zum Morgenbrot  
 erst ein Stücklein mir brach ich;  
 Trank auch einen Krug voll Wein dazu;  
 Und zur zärtlichen Laute  
jetzo greif’ ich. [...]*

*Mein arm heimatlich Land, wann werde ich  
dich wiedersehn.  
Mein arm heimatlich Land*

When examining the two texts side by side, the first noticeable difference is Eisler's removal of the last line of fragment seven. The original fragment reads,

“Und zur zärtlichen Laute greif ich jetzo, dem zartesten Kind ein Ständchen zu bringen.”

*“And now I reach for my gentle lute to serenade the most tender young one.”*

With Eisler's cut of the final part of the phrase, all that remains is the lute:

“Und zur zärtlichen Laute jetzo greif' ich.”

*“And now I reach for my gentle lute.”*

By discarding the words alluding to a romantic or sexual encounter, Eisler removes any association of the lute – of music itself – with physical pleasure. Music is no longer used to serenade a potential lover; rather, it is used to ease the suffering of homesickness. The removal of the “young one” as the desired object redirects the sexual longing of Anacreon's text to the subject of Fragment 15 – “Mein arm heimatlich Land...” (“*My poor homeland...*”) and to Eisler's own longing for home. It is the connection of the two fragments, and Eisler's alteration that effectively and efficiently shift the focus of the song. Fragment 15 originally reads,

“Mein arm heimatlich Land werd' ich denn wiedersehn.”

*“My poor homeland then will I see again.”*

But Eisler changes it to,

“Mein arm heimatlich Land, **wann** werde ich **dich** wiedersehn.”

*“My poor homeland, **when** will I see **you** again.”*

While the final punctuation of this sentence does not change, the insertion of “wann” (“when”) turns it into a cry of uncertainty, one that questions the inevitability of the return expressed in Anacreon’s text. Additionally, Eisler makes the desire for home more real and more focused by apostrophizing the homeland, addressing it directly with the informal “dich” (“you”). After this cry, Eisler returns to the first words of Fragment 15, “Mein arm heimatlich Land,” repeating it as a mantra, as a reminder of his exile with no end in sight. All of these changes shift the meaning of the final lines from being a confident statement of anticipated return home to a question full of uncertainty, doubt, hopelessness, and longing. It is an amazing moment both musically and textually. The remaining alteration is a small one, but helps to convey the misery, the hopelessness, and the depression of the person singing. Eisler takes the line, “Trank auch Wein einen Krug dazu;” (“*Also drank a jug of wine with it;*”), updates the word order, and inserts the word “voll” (“*full*”), arriving at, “Trank auch einen Krug **voll** Wein dazu;” (“*Also drank a jug **full** of wine with it;*”). A jug *full* of wine implies a desire for drunkenness to dull the senses, attempting to drown not just the sorrow expressed in “In der Frühe,” but all the misery and longing of the four songs that precede it.

Eisler’s musical setting reinforces this pain and hopelessness through its dissonant harmonies, languid lyrical vocal line, downward vocal gestures, and fairly sparse chordal accompaniment; many of these elements are present in No. II. [Dir auch wurde...], which also deals with the theme of longing. Upon first listen, the harmonic language of “In der Frühe” is atonal, rooted in the closely-voiced dissonant chords of the piano part. In the first half of the piece, each chord is contained within the span of an octave. Every chord throughout the piece, save one, contains either a major or minor second, or a major or

minor seventh, creating tight clusters of dissonances. The piano prelude begins with these tight dissonant clusters (Example 2.11), repeating them until the arrival of the lone consonant minor triad (m. 21), resumes them, once again, and continues to the end of the piece.



**Example 2.11 - "In der Frühe" piano prelude, mm. 1-9**

The melodic line, both in the piano and voice, floats above the cluster chords, and frequently hints at potential harmonic resolution, hoping, perhaps, that one of the dissonant chords underneath the melody might actually resolve to a consonant chord. The shifting nature of the harmonies gives the listener no tonal center to latch onto, as each chord feels like a higher-tertian chord in inversion. The lone A-minor triad in m. 21 allows the listener a brief respite from the dissonance, but Eisler quickly destabilizes this with the B-flats and G-flats in m. 23. The drunkenness of the “Krug voll Wein” is heard in the repeated descending diminished triad, first in the piano’s opening melodic material, then repeated when the vocalist sings, “Und zur zärtlichen Laute...” (Example 2.12).

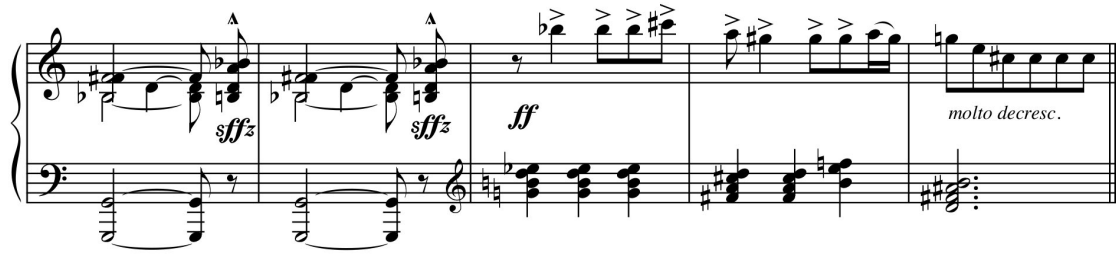
Und zur zärtlich - en Lau - te je - tzo greif ich.

*pp sub.*

Example 2.12 - "In der Frühe" mm. 17-21

The first reach into the upper tessitura for the singer occurs at the first statement of “Mein arm heimatlich Land...” This is when we finally understand why he is drunk, depressed, and playing sad music on his lute. Eisler incorporates a downward major third sighing gesture on both statements of “...Land,” to reinforce the lament.

The sadness and despair depicted in the melodic and harmonic material is further supported by Eisler’s proclivity for rhythmic obfuscation. As observed in songs I-III, syncopation, offbeat entrances, and mixed meters reinforce the instability of the text and harmony; in “In der Frühe,” this occurs almost exclusively in the piano. The prelude begins on an offbeat and immediately falls into syncopated rhythms, obscuring the beat until the downbeat of m. 3. Eisler then disrupts the tenuous rhythmic regularity he has established by shifting to what feels like 6/8 in m. 6. Once the voice enters in m. 9, the piano rhythms become more regular, almost as if it were imitating the lute of the text, and maintains that regularity until the postlude, beginning in m. 27. The postlude restates the right-hand melody of the prelude – but only after two measures of piano lament with shocking *sforzandissimo* chords on the final eighth-note – and then stops halfway through the melody leaving the listener uneasy, ill at ease, with no clear sense of what should come next (Example 2.13). And in this cycle nothing comes next!



Example 2.13 - "in der Frühe" postlude, mm. 27-31

The ending of “In der Frühe” leaves the listener in despair, without even a glimmer of hope for return or resolution. But when the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente* are considered together, “In der Frühe” becomes the low point, the darkest moment before things start to tentatively get better, putting in perspective the cautious hope and optimism of the Hölderlin songs. Interestingly, there is a motivic connection between the final vocal phrase of “In der Frühe” and four songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, a connection explored in Chapter 3, reinforcing the view that the Anacreon and Hölderlin cycles fit together thematically and programmatically.

#### “SPÄTER TRIUMPH”

No. IV “Später Triumph” (“*Delayed Triumph*”) contains the most significant text adaptation of the Anacreon settings, not only in the types of changes made, but also in the way those changes drastically alter the interpretation of the poem. The original text, Fragment 10 in Mörike’s collection, stands apart from the other texts Eisler chose for the *Anakreontische Fragmente* in that it is one of the most fragmented texts Mörike translated: his translation indicates significant amounts of original text missing after the



first two lines, and the final line trails off, incomplete. The level of fragmentation is compounded by Eisler's adaptation, resulting in a song text that consists of fragments of a fragmented fragment. On the surface, this text appears to have the least connection to Eisler's exile, as it makes no mention of war, homesickness, or the bitterness of aging. It tells the tale of Artemon, a filthy, unsavory character who cavorted with "man-hungry women," and was frequently locked up, beaten, and tortured. By the end of the text he has changed his fortunes, and is seen mounting a resplendent chariot, wearing gold earrings. It is an ancient Greek telling of a man rising from nothing, literally from the dirt, from bad company, and from imprisonment, to a position of wealth and power. Eisler read this text and saw it as an analogy for the politician that came to power in 1933 and drove him out of Germany. He originally titled the piece "Aufstieg eines Politikers" ("*Rise of a Politician*"), later changing it to "Später Triumph" ("*Delayed Triumph*").<sup>61</sup> The original title, combined with the bitterness of the music, indicates a connection to Hitler's rise from ostracization and imprisonment to the position of Chancellor of the Third Reich. While there is no record of Eisler linking his adaptation of this text to Hitler's rise to power, it is not a great leap to see the connection.

The first striking element of Eisler's text for "Später Triumph" is that the opening line of his adaptation begins mid-sentence. He cuts the first two lines of the original fragment, which mention the names of Eurypyle and Artemon; the cuts give the remaining text less specificity, making it more anonymous and therefore more accessible for contemporary audiences to understand within the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Eisler also removes the third and fourth lines describing Artemon's appearance, and begins the

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61 From Notes of Eisler's *Hollywood Liederbuch*, Oliver Dahin and Peter Deeg, editors, (Lepizig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 2007), 99.

piece with, “Und um die Rippen zog er sich ein kahles Ochsenfell...” (“*And around his ribs he wore a bare ox hide...*”).

**No. 10 (Anakreon/Mörke)**

Eurypyle liebt, die blonde, jetzt  
Den vielbeleckten Artemon.

Trag er den Wollgugel doch einst,  
jene geschnürte Wespenform,  
Hölzernes Ohrwürfelgehäng',  
und um die Rippen zog er sich  
Ein kahles Ochsenfell, von Schmutz Klebend,  
ein alt Schildfutteral;  
und mit der Brotverkäuferin Trieb er's  
und mannssüchtigen Weibsstücken,  
der schlechte Artemon.  
Unsauber ganz war sein Erwerb.  
Oft in dem Block lag sein Genick,  
desgleichen oft im Rad,  
und oft Auch mit dem Zuchtriemen gepeitscht  
ward er,  
und hundertmal am Schopf geschändet  
und sein Bart berupft.  
Jetzo den Prachtwagen  
besteigt er,  
und es trägt der Sohn Kykes  
Gold in den Ohr'n, schattendes Dach,  
zierlich gestielt aus Elfenbein,  
Als wie ein Weib...

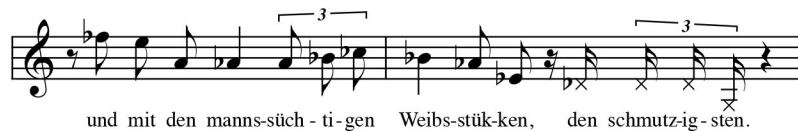
**IV. Später Triumph (Eisler)**

[...]

*Und um die Rippen zog er sich  
ein kahles Ochsenfell, von Schmutz starrend,  
ein altes Schildfutteral.  
Und mit der Brotverkäuferin trieb er's  
und mit den mannssüchtigen Weibsstücken,  
den schmutzigsten.  
Unsauber ganz war sein Gewerb.  
Oft im Block war sein Genick,  
desgleichen oft im Rad.  
Und oft auch mit [...] Zuchtruten gepeitscht  
ward er.  
Und [...] auch am Kopf geschändet  
und sein Bart gerupft.  
Und jetzt? Und jetzt? Den Prachtwagen  
besteigt er.  
[...]*

The lack of any introduction to the characters sets the tone of the piece, establishing a sense of unease from the first entrance. In addition to cutting lines of text, Eisler makes other changes, updating Mörike's nineteenth-century language to fit contemporary word usage, and altering certain words to intensify a phrase or make the wording more economical. The impact each change has on the interpretation varies, from subtle changes of appearance to obvious words of judgment and disgust. Changing the description of the Ochsenfell (*ox hide*) from “von Schmutz *klebend*” (“sticky from filth”) to “von Schmutz *starrend*” (“rigid from filth”) is a minor change, but a significant one when interpreting

this song as alluding to Hitler. It does not alter the sense of the person's appearance, but it does change the perception of character. Other changes may not have interpretive significance at all – like “Oft in dem Block lag sein Genick” (“*Often his neck lay in the stocks*”) to “Oft im Block *war* sein Genick” (“*Often his neck was in the stocks*”) – providing, instead, a smoother phonetic line for the singer. One change that is crucial to the bitter reading of the text is the replacement of “der schlechte Artemon” (“*the bad Artemon*”) with “den schmutzigsten” (“*the filthiest*”). Eisler not only removes the names to facilitate transposition onto the twentieth century, but he also makes a stronger statement of judgment both in the choice of word as well as in its setting. To emphasize the disgust this word implies, Eisler sets “den schmutzigsten” as *Sprechstimme* – the only time he uses this technique in the entire *Hollywood Liederbuch* (Example 2.14).



Example 2.14 - "Später Triumph" mm. 7-8

The final change Eisler makes alters the ending of the text. He cuts the last three lines of the original fragment, using the description of the character mounting the golden chariot as the final image. In addition to cutting the final lines, Eisler also makes a grammatical change to the last phrase that intensifies the narrator's bitterness and outrage; the line “Jetzo den Prachtwagen besteigt er,” (“*Now he mounts the golden chariot*”) – a statement of what the character is doing – becomes “Und jetzt? Und jetzt? Den Prachtwagen besteigt er.” (“*And now? And now? He mounts the golden chariot.*”). The repeated

question expresses exasperation and disbelief of the situation, as if the narrator is throwing his hands in the air and saying, “Can you believe this?!”

All of Eisler’s textual changes are reinforced by the musical setting. In this, perhaps the most angry, bitter, and cynical of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, Eisler returns to the elements used in “Geselligkeit betreffend” and “Die Unwürde des Alterns”: strong syncopated rhythms in the accompaniment; predominantly loud dynamics; considerably higher tessitura; sharp dotted rhythms in the vocal line; and more dissonant harmonic writing – all of which are present in the opening four measures (Example 2.15).

Mäßige

Und um die Rip - pen zog er sich —

*fp* *mf*

— ein kah - les Och - sen-fell, von Schmutz star-rend, ein al - tes Schild - fut-te - ral. —

Example 2.15 - "Später Triumph" mm. 1-4

Tritones and minor second abound, as do diminished chords (both in the piano and outlined melodically by the voice). The meter changes with some regularity throughout the piece, both to accommodate the chromatic movement in the accompaniment and to obscure any sense of rhythmic regularity or regular phrase lengths. All of the vocal

phrases that begin with the word “Und” (“*And*”)<sup>62</sup> begin on an offbeat; but not only does each phrase begin on a different offbeat within the measure, the meter changes from measure to measure, further muddling the rhythmic integrity and destabilizing the balance of phrase lengths. The only predictable element in all of the metrical and phrasal instability is the syncopated figure that pervades the first half of the piece. Beginning in m. 10, with the “Quasi Cadenza,” the piano writing becomes much more horizontal, lyrical, and melodic (Example 2.16), avoiding the chordal accompaniment of the first half until m. 18 (“Und auch am Kopf geschändet...”), and the return of the bitter syncopation in m. 23 (“Und jetzt? Und jetzt?”).



Example 2.16 - "Später Triumph" mm. 10-14

The horizontal piano lines also reinforce the overwhelming downward motion of the Anacreon songs. The cadenza develops its way down to low G2, skipping back up in m. 11, only to descend again, this time chromatically through all twelve pitches of the scale, arriving on low D2 in m. 14. In addition to the downward motion in the piano,

62 “Und um die Rippen...,” mm. 1-2; “Und mi der Brotverkäuferin...,” mm. 5-6; “und mit den mannssüchtigen...,” m. 7; “Und oft auch mit Zuchtruten...,” mm. 14-15; “Und auch am Kopf...,” m. 18; “Und jetzt? Und jetzt?” mm. 23-24.

every vocal phrase except the last one begins with downward motion, and even the last line finishes with the half-step descending figure (Example 2.17). When the piano suddenly moves up in mm. 21-22, and the vocal line follows in mm. 23-24, it is as if the despair has given way to rising anger that threatens to overwhelm all that has preceded it.

56

Und jetzt? Und jetzt? Den Pracht - wa - gen be - steigt er.

56

*fp* *cresc.*

*ff* *fp* *cresc.*

*lärmend*

3

Example 2.17 - "Später Triumph" ending, mm. 23-27

The bitterness and anger that pervades not only "Später Triumph," but the entire Anacreon cycle, is firmly rooted in the adaptations of Anacreon's texts. Eisler's textual changes, from one word in "Die Unwürde des Alterns" to the extensive alterations in "Später Triumph," facilitate the emotional characteristics of the musical setting. Layers of temporality, translation, and cultural distance allow Eisler the freedom to express himself with the words of Anacreon (through Mörike), while creating a meaning that is entirely his own.

### Chapter 3:       **Hope and Remembrance: The *Hölderlin-Fragmente***

*“That is to say, art also changes in tradition. Look, when I returned from the First World War, in 1919, I could never have set a poem like “An eine Stadt,” for example, because I was fed up with patriotism. The years of emigration, which sharpened the senses, had to come, and also the introspection, the art of remembering. You know, it is a great art, to remember. You aren’t able to do it because you are younger than me. But once you have been an emigrant for fourteen years, remembering this damned Germany, you get a different view of things. You look back - without sentimentality... A stupid composer would have turned all that [Hölderlin] into sentimental trash. My remembering was cool, polite, gentle.”<sup>63</sup>*

- Hanns Eisler

#### HÖLDERLIN, EISLER, AND THE SPECTER OF NATIONALISM

The six songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* are, in many ways, the antithesis of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*. While they share many features – at times similar harmonic language, common themes of longing and sorrow – the Hölderlin songs move away from the bitterness, cynicism, and hopelessness of the Anacreon cycle by focusing instead on remembrance and hope. Whereas the Anacreon songs see the present and foreseeable future as a continuation of past miseries, the Hölderlin songs recall past joys and sorrows as the cause of hope for the future. This shift in emotional outlook gives Eisler the opportunity to create a more cohesive overarching dramatic progression with the cycle, something not present in the Anacreon settings. It also allows him to progressively move

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<sup>63</sup> Bunge, 202-3.

away from the grinding dissonances of the Anacreon settings in favor of harmonic writing steeped in consonant sonorities. In addition to the shift in thematic and harmonic material, the songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* display a different approach to text adaptation, necessitated by the length and style of Hölderlin's poetry. Here, instead of working from relatively short texts that were already fragmented, as in the Anacreon songs, Eisler creates his own fragments from much longer poems – often ten or more stanzas over multiple pages. He attempts to distill the essence of Hölderlin's words, bringing a modernist sensibility to expansive nineteenth-century poems.

It is no coincidence that the year Eisler composed the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* – 1943 – marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hölderlin's death. Born in 1770 in the small town of Lauffen am Neckar in the Duchy of Württemberg, Johann Christian Friedrich Hölderlin studied theology at the Tübinger Stift along side the great German philosophers Hegel and Schelling. Finding the prospect of a life in the ministry unsustainable, Hölderlin eventually eschewed a religious calling in favor of travel, tutoring, and writing. As Hölderlin came of age, Europe was in a state of political upheaval; he was an early supporter of the ideals that inspired the French Revolution, particularly those of the Jacobins, but became disillusioned when the Jacobin movement succumbed to its more radical members led by Maximilien de Robespierre. During his twenties and thirties, Hölderlin moved around France and Germany as frequently as the political winds changed,<sup>64</sup> never at home, never settled, and always looking at Germany from the perspective of an outsider. The poems that resulted from this life of uprootedness, as Christopher Middleton observes, are “visionary works from an era of deep social

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<sup>64</sup> He supposedly journeyed from Lyon to Bordeaux, and then Bordeaux to Stuttgart via Paris and Strasbourg, almost entirely on foot.



turbulence, of violence, injustice, and lofty aspiration.”<sup>65</sup> The years of travel took a toll on his mental and physical health, and he was committed to an in-patient clinic in Tübingen in 1805. Discharged after a year and deemed incurable, Hölderlin was taken in by a local carpenter, who cared for the ailing poet until his death in 1843. Underappreciated and misunderstood during his lifetime, Hölderlin’s work did not elicit much of a following until the early twentieth century. With nationalist movements springing up throughout Europe at this time, it is no surprise that his poetry was coopted by right-wing German nationalists. The Nazis began using Hölderlin’s poetry in the 1930s, but the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death in 1943 gave them new occasion to use his works extolling the virtues of the fatherland as a model for the German people. Hölderlin was included in field volumes of ‘patriotic poetry’ distributed to German soldiers fighting in the war; the two most frequently quoted poems were the lengthy *Gesang des Deutschen* (*Song of the Germans*), which Eisler adapted as “Erinnerung,” and Goebbel’s favorite, the ode *Der Tod fürs Vaterland* (*Death for the Fatherland*).<sup>66</sup>

Why, then, in his American exile, was Eisler drawn to Hölderlin, whose poetry had such acquired negative connotations for Marxists, given the Nazis’ exploitation of his work? Was it homesickness, reminiscence, or as Friedericke Wißmann suggests, “calculated dialecticism”?<sup>67</sup> In one of his many interviews with Hans Bunge, Eisler explained the apparent contradictions in his setting of Hölderlin:

Picture this: I sit, an old communist, emigrated, in America; I see the tank battles; I look on...as they sacrifice themselves for a false

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<sup>65</sup> Christopher Middleton, [*Friedrich Hölderlin and Eduard Mörike*] *Selected Poems*, xi.

<sup>66</sup> Wißmann, 149.

<sup>67</sup> Wißmann, 148.

cause – and I write a poem about the glorification of Germany.  
You must admit: if ever something was dialectic, that is dialectic.<sup>68</sup>

The paradox of Eisler setting Hölderlin is itself a manifestation of Eisler's own internal conflict and contradictory feelings about his exile. Despite the ongoing efforts of the political left to reclaim Hölderlin from right-wing nationalists, Eisler's decision to set his poetry did not come without criticism, the sharpest of which came from his friend, Brecht. Speaking again with Hans Bunge, Eisler recalled,

[I]n the most difficult days of my emigration I set a poem...by Hölderlin [*Gesang der Deutschen*], about which Brecht was frantic and said, "Man, you're nationalist!"...It comes from a shameless nationalism. Because I still occasionally thought back on Germany during my emigration – and it wasn't sentimental, rather seen through the lens of Hölderlin, who was an early Jacobin.<sup>69</sup>

Eisler's interest in Hölderlin's Jacobinism centered on the poet's opposition to the "prevailing conservative, nationalistic view"<sup>70</sup> that pervaded Europe around the turn of the nineteenth century. Due in large part to Thomas Mann's essay "Hölderlin und Marx," Eisler, along with many other early-twentieth-century Marxists, saw this opposition as a philosophical predecessor to Marx, and saw themselves as the true heirs of Hölderlin's brand of nationalism. Eisler's choice of Hölderlin served a dual function: it was an expression of his own exile experience and a symbolic rejection of the Nazis' use of Hölderlin. In particular, Eisler worked to reclaim the very poem that the Nazis used to extoll the right-wing nationalism that drove him out of Germany in 1933.

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68 Bunge, 205.

69 Bunge, 202.

70 Hanns-Werner Heister, "Hollywood and Home," *Hanns Eisler: A Miscellany*, ed. David Blake (New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995), 207.

There are obvious parallels between Hölderlin and Eisler: frequent, often politically-necessitated travel; similar political ideals (at least in Eisler's mind); love for Germany tinged with sadness at its failure to embody certain ideals. When viewed through the lens of those similarities, Eisler's attraction to Hölderlin's poetry seems obvious. He felt that Hölderlin – and as an extension, his poetry – was himself political, even revolutionary in spirit. Like Hölderlin, there was no home inside or outside Germany for Eisler. He and his fellow German exiles felt a close connection with Hölderlin, drawing parallels between his loneliness and homelessness and their own exile experiences. Albrecht Dümmling notes, "Without giving up their cosmopolitan internationalism, they developed a patriotism, one that resembled Hölderlin's enlightened love of the Fatherland, a patriotism the elegiac movement became obsessed with due to the disparity between the ideal and reality."<sup>71</sup> Out of this enlightened patriotism come Eisler's settings – visionary songs from a new era of deep social turbulence, of unspeakable violence, of injustice, and lofty aspiration – giving voice to Hölderlin in the mid-twentieth century.

In contrast to the pessimism of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, the six poems Eisler adapted for the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* portray, if not outright optimism, at least a more positive outlook for the exile. Hope, memories of travel, questions of how things got so bad, homesickness, visions of home, thoughts of the future – these songs depict the start of what Eisler hoped would be a way forward, not only for himself, but for all of Germany. Not only do the moods of the two cycles differ, the methods of text adaptation differ as well. As we saw in Chapter Two, Eisler was working with short fragments of

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71 Albrecht Dümmling, *Lied und Lyric: Friedrich Hölderlin vertont von Hanns Eisler, Paul Hindemith, Max Reger*, (Munich: Kindler, 1981), 12.

Anacreon's poetry that, for the most part, already suited his preference for compact, concise texts; they still required adaptation to fit Eisler's aesthetic and artistic goals, but the majority of what Anacreon/Mörike wrote appears in the song texts. The Hölderlin song texts, on the other hand, are an exercise in selective quoting, or to state it more bluntly, drastic cutting. Many of Hölderlin's poems are large in scope and long in length, often with ten or more strophes spanning multiple pages. They therefore require significant cutting to achieve the compact model of the Brecht and Anacreon/Mörike poems. Eisler described his approach, saying,

When I set a poem [like Hölderlin's], for example, first I make the selection. Then I shorten it. I make fragments. Brecht said to me in Hollywood: "It is remarkable, how you removed the plaster from Hölderlin! You seek out the lines you need and set them, and somehow it works." ...from one poem by Hölderlin that has four pages of strophes, I chose eight lines. Then it made sense.<sup>72</sup>

With the exception of No. IV "Die Heimat," whose two-strophe text stays essentially intact, all of the Hölderlin songs consist of severe editing that leaves the majority of what Hölderlin wrote on the cutting floor. The amount of text cut varies from piece to piece; No. V "An eine Stadt" uses five of the original eight strophes. No. I "An die Hoffnung" and No. II "Andenken" each keep two of five strophes. But No. III "Elegie 1943" and No. VI "Erinnerung," originally fourteen and fifteen strophes respectively, keep only a third of their original texts.

While Eisler uses only a small amount of Hölderlin's text, that which remains allows him to focus on remembrance, on thinking back, he also looks ahead, and from his

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<sup>72</sup> Bunge, 201

place of exile envisions a future for his homeland, one of promise, of a society and culture rebuilt – presumably to his socialist ideals. Heister notes that in the autograph score of No. II “Andenken” Eisler wrote (and later crossed out):

*Preface to the Hollywood Songbook*

In a society which understands and loves such a song book, it will be possible to live safely and well. It is with confidence in such a society that these pieces are written.

Hanns Eisler 3 June 1943  
(Pacific Palisades)

P.S. What can music, alongside so much else, do for the future? It can help to avoid a false richness of tone.<sup>73</sup>

‘DE-PLASTERING’ HÖLDERLIN

Since Eisler’s approach to adapting Hölderlin differs from his approach to adapting Anacreon, I will address the texts and musical settings separately. In discussing the texts, I have grouped songs roughly by affect and the nature of the adaptation in an effort to indicate patterns in Eisler’s text adaptation and setting. As Eisler acknowledged, he removed vast portions of the original poems, trying to distill the text into its purest

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<sup>73</sup> Eisler, *Hollywood Liederbuch*, as quoted in the Notes, 99. Whether he was aware of it or not, Eisler’s dedication mirrors part of a letter Hölderlin wrote to his brother in September 1793, in which he stated, “I no longer rely on individual men. My love is mankind... the generations of centuries to come. ... Freedom must come one day, and virtue will flourish better in the holy and warming light of freedom, than in the icy zone of despotism. We live in a time period where we work for better days ahead. These seeds of enlightenment, these quiet wishes and efforts of individuals for the betterment of mankind will broaden and strengthen, and bear glorious fruit. ... This is what I hang my hopes on. This is the holy aim of my wishes and doings: that in our time I may quicken the seeds that will ripen in a future time.” (Friedrich Hölderlin, *Briefe*, (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1954), 92-93).

essence, free of extraneous language or references. Even with that in mind, Eisler's adaptations of Hölderlin are long, the longest in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. While some portions of the texts are presented in the body of this analysis, the complete Hölderlin texts and Eisler's adaptations are found in Appendix II due to their length.

To analyze what Eisler keeps we must first look at the things he excises. Mythological references, repetitive images, and anything else that does not speak directly to the truth of the exile experience is done away with. Five of the six songs contain such drastic editing, while the remaining song, "Die Heimat," has just a few subtle, but still meaningful changes. All of the structural and content-related changes Eisler makes serve the larger-scale alteration of the texts' dramatic arcs. Hölderlin's poems, while often long and prone to rambling, usually have a clear dramatic arc. They start off with a set of circumstances that create some initial tension, and then, often over the course of many strophes, resolve, at least to some degree, that tension. Eisler's adaptations consistently exclude the latter strophes of each poem, setting up the initial tension, without providing any textual resolution – a technique that is also expressed musically. This lack of textual and dramatic resolution mirrors many of the Anacreon fragments, but in the Anacreon, the lack of resolution is inherent in their already-fragmented state. As the degree of musical tension and resolution varies depending on the mood of the song, so does the degree of tension and resolution that Eisler sets up in the text. The more emotionally wrought pieces – "An die Hoffnung," "Elegie 1943," and "Die Heimat" – have a greater degree of unresolved tension in the texts.

The first song, “An die Hoffnung” (“*To Hope*”), is a suitable introduction to Eisler’s fragmentation process in the Hölderlin cycle.<sup>74</sup> In this poem, Hölderlin begins by asking, “O hope...where are you?” There is a bleakness to the first two strophes, as Hölderlin wonders where hope has gone; this bleakness is tempered in the last three strophes, as he sets about finding hope in quiet valleys, amidst flowers, in the deep of night, in the garden of Aether (a primordial deity from Greek mythology). Hope does not return in Hölderlin’s text, but its return is implicit in the confidence of the character’s waiting. Eisler’s situation in 1943 left him less optimistic about finding the hope that was fading away as the war and his exile dragged on. This is reflected in his fragmented version of “An die Hoffnung,” where, instead of setting the latter strophes describing the beautiful setting in which he will wait for hope’s return, Eisler ends his song with the image of a heart, numb at hope’s absence.

Wenig lebt’ ich;	<i>I have hardly lived;</i>
doch atmet kalt mein Abend schon.	<i>Yet, my evening already breathes cold.</i>
Und stille, den Schatten gleich,	<i>And quietly, like shadows,</i>
bin ich schon hier; und schon gesanglos	<i>I am already here; and without song</i>
schlummert das schauernde Herz.	<i>Sleeps my shuddering heart.</i>

The lack of hope in Eisler’s text is not that different from the hopelessness in the Anacreon songs, but here, instead of expressing bitterness and anger over the lack of hope, Eisler seems to simply be asking: where has hope gone? The omission of Hölderlin’s resolution makes the text bleaker, as if the speaker has lost not only hope, but is also on the verge of giving up the chance of finding it ever again. But the lack of

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<sup>74</sup> Eisler had particular affinity for this text and setting, as he considered its use in two other larger works. In the autograph of the score he noted, “Possibly use as an interlude for [the opera project] *Goliath*.” In 1962, just before his death, Eisler also included this piece in his *Ernste Gesänge* in a version for baritone and string orchestra.

resolution also leaves the door open to the possibility, however small, that hope may yet return. The despair of “An die Hoffnung” picks up where *Anakreontische Fragmente*’s “In der Frühe” leaves off, giving the Hölderlin cycle a place to begin its climb through memory toward to the rediscovery of hope.

Along the way from the hopelessness of “An die Hoffnung” to the hopefulness of “Erinnerung,” Eisler takes us through remembrances, both pleasant and uncomfortable. No. III “Elegie 1943” (“*Elegy 1943*”) is among the latter, grappling with issues of collective guilt and responsibility. The Hölderlin poem from which “Elegie 1943” is taken, titled “Der Frieden” (“*Peace*”), is a fourteen-strophe poem that recounts the perseverance of peace (an eternal, almost mythological, personified peace), through great wars and storms, darkness, intolerance and injustice; it must sustain itself through the constant change of the seasons, and help lead heroes to the realm of Helios where eternal rest awaits them. From all of this material, Eisler alters not only the lines of text, but also the central theme of Hölderlin’s poem – peace (the title) – creating a text whose emotion barely resembles that of the poem from which it came. Of the three songs that involve changes to the title,<sup>75</sup> this one is the most drastic and represents the most significant shift from Hölderlin’s concept of the text to that of Eisler’s.

More specifically, the change of “Der Frieden” to “Elegie 1943” signals a fundamentally different outlook, moving from peace and hope to sadness and strife. Not surprisingly, Eisler focuses on the tribulations of “Der Frieden,” cutting Hölderlin’s fourteen strophes down to fragments of just five, using only the lines full of despair, persecution, and questions of culpability, and leaves the listener with no resolution, no

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75 “Andenken,” “Elegie 1943,” and “An eine Stadt.”



image of triumphant peace reigning over all. Eisler uses the first two strophes of “Der Frieden” with some cuts, describing the rising floodwaters of turmoil, the spreading conflict, the battle like none that had come before that shrouded peoples’ heads in darkness and pallor. Already in these first two strophes Eisler is reshaping Hölderlin’s lines to emphasize the shift in world view since the nineteenth century, that the turmoil and conflict of Eisler’s time (especially post-World War I) inspires a lack of faith in larger forces at work. Hölderlin’s first two strophes read,

Wie wenn die alten Wasser, die in andern Zorn In schräklichern verwandelt wieder Kämen, zu reinigen, da es noth war,	<i>As the old waters, into another fury Terrifyingly grew and returned, to cleanse, as needed,</i>
So gählt und wuchs und woogte von Jahr zu Jahr Rastlos und überschwemmte das bange Land Die unerhörte Schlacht, daß weit hüllt Dunkel und Blässe das Haupt der Menschen.	<i>So boiled and grew and swelled from year to year, Restless and overflowing the fearful land, The battle like no other, until far and wide the peoples’ heads were shrouded in darkness and pallor.</i>

Eisler’s first two strophes use the majority of this text, but are missing the end of the first strophe and the middle of the second; the latter change serves to streamline the text, while the former can be viewed as Eisler’s rejection of the notion that such “cleansing floods” are a necessity, that they could serve any larger purpose.

Wie wenn die alten Wasser, die in andern Zorn In schrecklichen verwandelt wieder Kämen [...]	<i>As the old flood waters, into another fury Terrifyingly grew and returned [...],</i>
So gärt’ und wuchs und wogte von Jahr zu Jahr [...] Die unerhörte Schlacht, daß weit hüllt Dunkel und Blässe das Haupt der Menschen.	<i>So boiled and grew and swelled from year to year [...], The battle like no other, until far and wide the peoples’ heads were shrouded in darkness and pallor.</i>

After setting the stage for the great conflict, Eisler then skips over the strophes dealing with the mythological figure Nemesis the Avenger, of the actions of heroes in battle, of the dead resting under Italian gardens of laurel, jumping to strophe seven, where the lines of “Der Frieden” are startlingly relevant to the circumstances surrounding his exile. With only a few changes to Hölderlin’s text – cutting a few words or parts of lines in strophes seven, eight, and nine – Eisler arrives at,

Wer brachte den Fluch? Von heut ist er nicht und nicht von gestern. Und die zuerst das Maß verloren, unsre Väter wußten es nicht.	<i>Who brought this curse? It is not today’s, nor yesterday’s. And those who first crossed the bounds, our fathers, did it unknowingly.</i>
Zu lang, zu lang schon treten die Sterblichen sich gern aufs Haupt, den Nachbar fürchtend.	<i>Too long, too long have mortals trod gleefully upon the heads of others, fearing their neighbors.</i>
Und unstet, irren und wirren, dem Chaos gleich, dem gärenden Geschlecht die Wünsche nach und wild ist und verzagt und kalt von Sorgen das Leben.	<i>And unsteadily, wildly, and confused, like chaos, desires and wishes ferment, and wild and fearful and cold from worry is life.</i>

Just as in “An die Hoffnung,” Eisler concludes “Elegie 1943” with no resolution to the conflict in the text, leaving the listener to wonder if the cold and fearfulness will ever subside.

## SONGS OF REMEMBRANCE

The songs of remembrance, numbers II. “Andenken,” V. “An eine Stadt,” and VI. “Erinnerung,” have a different relationship with text adaptation and resolution than “An

die Hoffnung” and “Elegie 1943.” This is one of the main features that differentiate the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* from the *Anakreontische Fragmente*. The three “remembrance” song texts vary in the degree to which they use Hölderlin’s endings, but they all have some semblance of resolution in the text, providing a contrast to the abrupt, jarring endings of “An die Hoffnung” and “Elegie 1943.” These memories provide moments of peace and calm as they reflect on a better time, on a better place than where Eisler was in 1943. He, of course, upends this calm in the case of “Andenken” and “An eine Stadt” through his musical setting.

In “Andenken” (“*Memories*”), the second of the Hölderlin songs, the mood shifts from the hopelessness of “An die Hoffnung” to pleasant reminiscence. Hölderlin’s original poem is five strophes of moderate length in which the poet recalls travels past, praising the north-easterly wind and the promises of happy voyages it gives sailors. He speaks of Bordeaux – a place where Hölderlin spent time during his wanderings – of the river Garonne and the trees lining its banks. He praises good conversation and tales of love and deeds in days past. He wonders where his friends have gone, and ends with,

...Es nehmet aber	... <i>It is the sea that takes</i>
Und giebt Gedächtniß die See	<i>and gives remembrance,</i>
Und die Lieb’ auch heftet fleißig die Augen,	<i>and love keeps its eyes attentively fixed,</i>
Was bleibet aber, stiften die Dichter.	<i>But what remains the poets provide.</i>

Hölderlin’s first two strophes focus on the location of the memory, describing the landscape and the people there. The last three strophes take a turn to more melancholy, philosophical themes. In his adaptation, Eisler focus only on the specific images of place. He jettisons all of Hölderlin’s text that deals with larger-scale issues – musings on the situation in Bordeaux at the turn of the nineteenth century, why it is not like it used to be,

where everyone has gone, what is left in life but our memories, poets creating the only thing that lasts – and uses only the first strophe and half of the second strophe to create a sense of a place far away (from Hollywood), and of good times long ago. Without all of Hölderlin’s philosophical questioning, Eisler’s text functions as a self-contained, pristine recollection of Bordeaux. The reduction of the original text places the focus solely on the location rather than on the feelings of how that place has changed. There is much in the last three stanzas that could fit Eisler’s mood/mental or emotional state – wondering where friends have gone, loneliness, drinking – but there is also an acceptance of things not being so good any more in those final stanzas that Eisler seems to want no part of. He recalls the memory to fuel the longing for the far-away place, but at the same time frees it from the burden of the present by keeping the text focused solely on the past. The sadness that stems from the juxtaposition of the memory on the present comes from the music. By cutting the last three stanzas Eisler also removes the notion of there being some peace in the sea or in the words of poets, as Hölderlin implied. Eisler’s text is a retreat from the world and a demand for engagement at the same time, implying that it is possible to return to those good times, or at least to create new ones, but only through purposeful actions.<sup>76</sup>

“An eine Stadt,” like “Andenken,” is a song of remembrance and homage to a place far away. The poem from which Eisler adapted his text, titled “Heidelberg”, is a celebration of the picturesque city situated on the Neckar River. Hölderlin grew up 70km southeast of Heidelberg, but did not travel there until 1788 at the age of 18. His first view of the city and its surroundings created a lasting impression. In a letter to his mother

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<sup>76</sup> To see the excised strophes, refer to Appendix I, page 92.

dated June 3, 1788, he wrote, “Around midday we arrived in Heidelberg. The city seems to suit me extremely well. The location is so beautiful, more than one could imagine.”<sup>77</sup> Hölderlin returned frequently to Heidelberg, developing a love for the city. He completed his ode to Heidelberg in the summer of 1800 as a tribute to the place that comforted and inspired him. While I have found no record of Eisler spending time in Heidelberg, it is clear that he saw in Hölderlin’s poem a tribute to cities everywhere that create the feeling of home. As he had no attachment to the city of Hölderlin’s text, he transposed its evocative language onto another city, necessitating the title change from “Heidelberg” to “To a city.” The lack of specificity in Eisler’s new title might lead performers and audiences to believe he meant to recall any number of cities from his past. But closer examination reveals more specificity than is initially obvious. Eisler dedicated “An eine Stadt” to Franz Schubert,<sup>78</sup> indicating that his thoughts were focused on his hometown of Vienna and the Danube River, along whose banks he grew up.

Despite the change in title and omission of stanzas four, six, and seven, the overall impression of the text remains. It is still a love poem – or in this case, a love song – to a city that sustains, shelters, and inspires. The words, lines, and strophes that Eisler removes contain mentions of gods, repetitive elements, and images that are less relevant to the text’s transposition onto another city (particularly strophes six and seven about Heidelberg’s castle). Strophes two and three demonstrate the kind of selective cutting Eisler employs.

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<sup>77</sup> Hölderlin, *Briefe*, 35.

<sup>78</sup> Albrecht Dümmling suggests that it was Eisler’s time in Hollywood that led to a deepening of his identification with both Schubert and Hölderlin; his desire to accurately portray his exile experience drew him to their skillful and frequent depiction of the foreigner and wanderer. (Dümmling, *Lied und Lyric: Friedrich Hölderlin*, 102).

**(Hölderlin – “Heidelberg”, strophes 2 & 3)**

Wie der Vogel des Walds über die Gipfel fliegt,  
Schwingt sich über den Strom,  
    wo er vorbei dir glänzt  
Leicht und kräftig die Brücke,  
Die von Wagen und Menschen tönt.

Wie von Göttern gesandt, fesselt' ein Zauber  
    einst  
Auf die Brücke mich an, da ich vorüber gieng,  
Und herein in die Berge  
Mir die reizende Ferne schien,

**(Eisler – “An eine Stadt”, strophes 2 & 3)**

*Wie der Vogel des Walds über die Gipfel fliegt,  
schwimmt sich über den Strom,  
    wo er vorbei dir glänzt  
leicht und kräftig die Brücke,  
die von Wagen und Menschen tönt.*

*[...]  
Da ich vorüber ging,  
[...] fesselt' der Zauber auch mich,  
und herein in die Berge  
mir die reizende Ferne schien.*

The final lines of strophe three marvel at the surroundings, saying “As I crossed over [the bridge], an enchantment transfixed me, and up in the hills the alluring distance glimmered.” The recollection of the city is itself an enchantment, giving the exile rest and respite from the harshness of his present-day realities. They are a welcome calm after the great sorrow and lamenting of “Die Heimat.”

In contrast to the originally lengthy memories of travel and home in “Andenken” and “An eine Stadt,” “Die Heimat” (“*Home*”), the fourth of the Hölderlin songs, is the shortest and least-altered of all the Hölderlin texts, due in large part to the original poem’s inherent brevity and incisive expression of the exile’s longing for home. A mere two stanzas long, Hölderlin’s text combines recollections of home with deep expressions of sorrow and longing; all the thematic elements are present in the short form that Eisler prefers, similar to [Dir auch wurde...] from the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, which also deals with longing for home. Therefore, the changes he makes to Hölderlin’s poem are more akin to those made in the *Anakreontische Fragmente* – individual word changes, parts of lines cut – and less like the other Hölderlin settings where large quantities of text

are done away with. When placed side by side, the two versions of “Die Heimat” are very similar.

**Die Heimat (Hölderlin)**

Froh kehrt der Schiffer heim an den stillen  
Strom

Von fernen Inseln, wo er geerntet hat;  
Wohl möcht’ auch ich zur Heimath wieder;  
Aber was hab’ ich, wie Leid, geerntet? –

Ihr holden Ufer, die ihr mich auferzogt,  
Stillt ihr der Liebe Laiden? ach! gebt ihr mir,  
Ihr Wälder meiner Kindheit, wann ich  
Komme, die Ruhe noch Einmal wieder?

**Die Heimat (Eisler)**

Froh kehrt der Schiffer heim an die hellen  
Strome

von fernen Inseln, wo er geerntet hat.  
Wohl möchte [...] ich gern zur Heimat wieder.  
Ach was hab’ ich, wie Leid, geerntet.

Ihr holden Ufer, die ihr mich auferzogt,  
[...] ach gebt ihr mir,  
ihr Wälder meiner Kindheit, wann ich  
wiederkehre, die Ruhe noch einmal wieder.

There are four word changes, all of which contribute to a substantial shift in the interpretation of the text. The first occurs in line one; Eisler changes “...an den stillen Strom” (“...to the quiet stream”) to “...an die hellen Strome” (“...to the bright streams”), invoking a brighter, perhaps happier place to which the sailor wishes to return. The second change in strophe one/line three replaces the word “auch” (“also”) with “gern” (“very much”), serving the dual function of intensifying the sentiment and distancing the poet from the sailor mentioned in line one (implied by the “also” in Hölderlin’s text). In the final line of the first strophe, “Aber” (“But”) is replaced with “Ach!” (“Ah!”). Hölderlin’s use of “aber” implies that the poet cannot return home due to the misery he has reaped; Eisler’s change removes that implication – implying that return might be possible – and simultaneously amplifies the lament of reaping such misery. The fourth word change is crucial to the reading of Eisler’s text as he removes Hölderlin’s “komme” (“come”), in strophe two, line four, and replaces it with “wiederkehre” (“come back”), signifying the poet’s firm resolve to return home. Eisler also removes the first half of

strophe two/line two, “Stillt ihr der Liebe Laiden?” (“*Can you quiet love’s sufferings?*”), as his longing for home has nothing to do with love or any suffering associated with it.

The most significant and yet least noticeable change occurs at the end of each strophe. In Hölderlin’s version, both strophes end with a question: “What have I reaped but misery?” and “Can you...give me peace once again?” Due to German syntax, Eisler is able to leave Hölderlin’s exact wording intact, but with a simple change in punctuation, he completely alters the reading of the sentence. Hölderlin’s poem is full of longing but also full of doubt. The question marks indicate a degree of uncertainty about returning. Eisler wants there to be no doubt that he intends to return. It is as if he is saying that being away from home has caused his miseries, and insists that upon his return he will find the peacefulness of his childhood. This final phrase of “Die Heimat” recalls the ending phrase of “In der Frühe” from the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, where the poet wonders about his return home. Both songs grapple with longing for home, but where Eisler alters the Anacreon fragment to introduce an element of uncertainty of return, he alters the Hölderlin to remove that uncertainty, insisting rather than wondering about the return. Eisler’s uncertainty comes in the musical setting, where he undermines the confidence of the text changes he made. While Hölderlin’s poem exhibits his ability to concisely articulate the longing of the exile, Eisler’s alterations emphasize certain aspects of that longing by shifting the tone to one of insistence, demanding a return to life the way it was before the disruption of exile.

The final song of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, “Erinnerung” (“*Remembrance*”) is Eisler’s setting of the Hölderlin poem “Gesang der Deutschen” (“*Song of the Germans*”). In addition to being the most famous of the six poems Eisler selected, it is also the most



problematic due to its nationalist overtones and subsequent adoption by the Nazis. In “Erinnerung” Eisler employs his keen ability to extract subtle secondary themes, constructing a text that not only reclaims Hölderlin’s poetry from fascist propaganda, but also critiques the condition of Germany in 1943 and offers hope of rebuilding a better nation. To accomplish all of these tasks, Eisler reduces Hölderlin’s lengthy ode from fifteen strophes down to four, expunging the predictably inessential (in Eisler’s view) elements – mythological and historical figures (Minerva, the muse Urania, Plato, Athenians), references to Greece (Attica, Delos, Olympia), and repetitive imagery – while also avoiding lines that overtly extoll Germany’s greatness. He achieves this through the removal of entire strophes. That which he does retain involves only one – one, I say! – word change, and that is in strophe four where he changes the phrase “...das holde Grün” (“... *the lovely green*”) to “...das sanfte Grün” (“...*the gently rolling green*”). Everything else remains intact. He takes the four strophes (one, two, four, and six) and weaves a dramatic arc that begins with the poet’s homeland a mere shadow of its former (and potential) glory, destroyed by those who would use its resources for their own gain. Despite this abuse, the poet still sees the inherent beauty in its landscape, in its cities, and in its people (particularly its artists), who bask in the light of knowledge and are enlightened to continue their work earnestly. In these four strophes, Eisler mourns for what has become of his homeland, but uses the images of the land and its people as inspiration, as hope for not just a return to Germany’s former glory, but perhaps the building of a better society in which, as the discarded preface states, “it will be possible to live safely and well.”

The ending that Eisler leaves the listener with, one that is hopeful and provides a

sense of closure while still looking forward, is an anomaly in the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, and perhaps in the entire *Hollywood Liederbuch*. Here we get a resolution, but not the one Hölderlin envisioned. It is a resolution, not just for this poem but for the whole cycle,<sup>79</sup> that is constructed from Hölderlin's words but solely on Eisler's terms. Like the texts Eisler created for "An die Hoffnung" and "Elegie 1943," "Erinnerung" uses strophes from only the first half of the original, leaving out Hölderlin's multi-strophe mythological associations, which, as a result, abandons Hölderlin's resolution. But Eisler finds a strophe – strophe six – that contains all of his hope and all of the finality he feels he can handle, and uses that to give the song and the cycle closure, which he backs up in the music in a way that is shockingly unique in all the *Hollywood Liederbuch*. Eisler begins with no changes to Hölderlin's first two strophes, which cry to the fatherland and lament the great injuries and injustices it has suffered.

**"Gesang der Deutschen"/"Erinnerung"  
(Hölderlin/Eisler)**

O heilig Herz der Völker, o Vaterland!  
Alldulndend, gleich der schweigenden  
Mutter Erd,  
Und allverkannt, wenn schon aus deiner  
Tiefe die Fremden ihr Bestes haben!

Sie ernten den Gedanken, den Geist von dir,  
Sie pflücken gern die Traube, doch höhnen sie  
dich, ungestalte Rebel! daß du  
schwankend den Boden und wild umirrest.

**"Song of the Germans"/"Remembrance"  
(Hölderlin/Eisler)**

O holy heart of the people, o fatherland!  
Long-suffering, like the silent  
mother earth,  
misunderstood, when from your depths  
strangers have found their best.

They reaped thoughts and spirits from you  
they happily picked the grape,  
but they ridiculed you, shapeless vine,  
so that you fell to the ground and roamed wildly.

He follows the opening lament not with Hölderlin's third strophe, which proclaims,

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<sup>79</sup> In a way, Eisler's ending in "Erinnerung" feels like a resolution for the entire *Hollywood Liederbuch*, despite the fact that eight more songs were written after the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, many of which were reactions to extremely unpleasant events in Eisler's life.

“Du Land des hohen ernsteren Genius! / Du Land der Liebe!”

*“You land of the high most serious genius! / You land of love!”*

but jumps instead to the fourth strophe, which describes the beauty of the land despite the atrocities committed against it. Eisler then skips strophe five, which contains more images of the landscape, using Hölderlin’s sixth strophe as the final strophe for “Erinnerung.”

Und an den Ufern sah ich die Städte blühn,  
Die Edlen, wo der Fleiß in der Werkstatt  
schweigt,  
Die Wissenschaft, wo deine Sonne  
Milde dem Künstler zum Ernste leuchtet.

*And on the banks I saw the cities bloom,  
the noble ones, where industry is silent in the  
workshops,  
knowledge, whose mild sun  
enlightens the artist to be earnest.*

To distinguish his nationalism from that of the Nazis’ “Blut und Boden,” Eisler’s final strophe looks forward, not back, to an ideal socialist Germany – one of work, industry, and enlightenment.

## MUSICAL PROMISE AND FULFILLMENT

The considerable length of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* texts, particularly those of “Elegie 1943,” “An eine Stadt,” and “Erinnerung,” presented Eisler with musical challenges that he did not encounter in the *Anakreontische Fragmente*. These songs, some of the longest in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, offered him the opportunity to more deeply explore the wide emotional range of the texts through sectional writing and larger-scale motivic development. While the songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* have a more

optimistic outlook than those of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, they are also full of the pitfalls of reflection and hope – misremembering the past and the uncertainty of the future. I have chosen to discuss these songs out of order, again, to emphasize motivic and harmonic connections among the songs.

As a cycle, the Hölderlin settings share common rhythmic and harmonic characteristics with the *Anakreontische Fragmente* – syncopation and meter changes, atonality with varying degrees of dissonance and tonal allusions; but where the Anacreon settings stay mired in hopelessly bitter rhythms and dissonances, the Hölderlin songs become more rhythmically regular and more consonant and tonal as the texts look toward the future.

Here, as in the Anacreon songs, Eisler uses rhythmic motives to emphasize moments of uncertainty, returning to the syncopated figure that plays such a prominent role in “Die Unwürde des Alterns” and “Später Triumph.” In the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* this syncopation appears in the accompaniment of two songs: the brooding, questioning “Elegie 1943”; and the longing-filled “Die Heimat.” When it first occurs in the piano in m. 18 of “Elegie 1943” (Example 3.1), the syncopation underscores the uneasiness in the text,

“daß weit hüllt in Dunkel und Bläse das Haupt der Menschen.”

*“until far and wide the peoples’ heads were shrouded in darkness and pallor.”*

It is the only rhythmic feature of the accompaniment until m. 22, at which point Eisler returns to a previous rhythmic motive in the outer voices of the piano, while maintaining the syncopation in the inner voices.

daß weit hüllt in Dun - kel und Bläs - se das Haupt der

Men - schen.

The musical score for 'Elegie 1943' consists of two systems. The first system features a vocal line in 2/4 time with lyrics 'daß weit hüllt in Dun - kel und Bläs - se das Haupt der'. The piano accompaniment is in 2/4 time, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system shows the vocal line continuing with 'Men - schen.' while the piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic pattern.

Example 3.1 - "Elegie 1943" syncopation, mm. 18-25

In "Die Heimat," the syncopation, again, serves to accentuate the uneasiness in the text. But in contrast to the foreboding nature of "Elegie 1943," here it gives emphasis to a cry of lamentation, when the singer bemoans his fate:

"Ach was hab ich, wie Leid geerntet."

*"Ah, how I have reaped misery."*

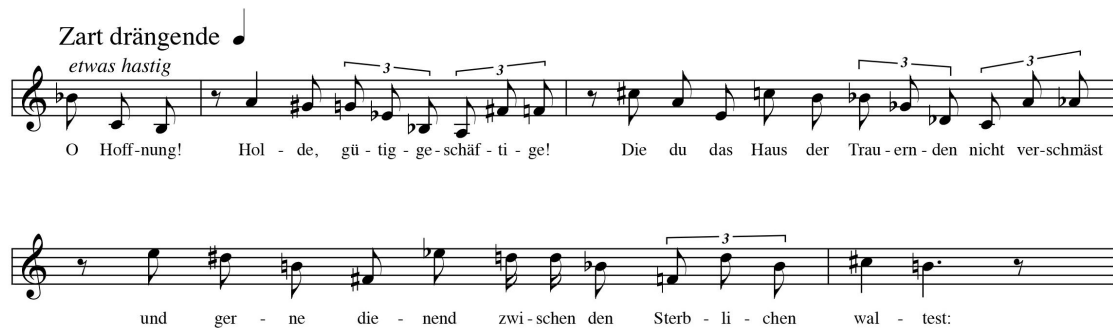
Eisler uses the rhythm in the left hand alone, leaving the right hand free to make the lamenting downward skips in mm. 11-13 (Example 3.2).

Ach was hab ich, wie Leid, ge-ern-tet. Ach was hab ich, wie Leid, ge-ern-tet.

The musical score for 'Die Heimat' consists of two systems. The first system features a vocal line in 2/4 time with lyrics 'Ach was hab ich, wie Leid, ge-ern-tet. Ach was hab ich, wie Leid, ge-ern-tet.' The piano accompaniment is in 2/4 time, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system shows the vocal line continuing with 'Ach was hab ich, wie Leid, ge-ern-tet.' while the piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic pattern.

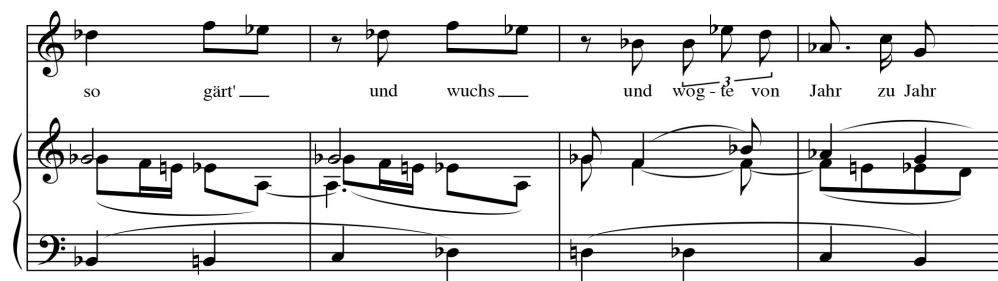
Example 3.2 - "Die Heimat" syncopation, mm. 10-15

Syncopation, rhythmic displacement, and meter changes play a large role in the vocal line as well, shifting arrival points in the text that, at times, creates a jarring, unsettled feeling; the instability of the rhythms never allows the singer or the listener to feel a sense of regularity or predictability, and never allows the musical phrasing to settle on the main beats. There is a duality to this displacement; while it is unsettling, it frequently serves the declamation by facilitating proper syllabic stress. This is best observed in “Elegie 1943” and “An die Hoffnung.” The nebulous, uncertain opening statement of “An die Hoffnung” is depicted both in the rhythmic instability of each line of text starting on an offbeat, and in the atonality of the vocal melody that, in the first four measures, contains all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale (Example 3.3).



**Example 3.3 - "An die Hoffnung" vocal line, mm. 1-4**

Eisler uses the syncopation and offbeat entrances to similar effect in three sections of “Elegie 1943” (Examples 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6).



Example 3.4 - "Elegie 1943" mm. 12-15

Example 3.5 - "Elegie 1943" mm. 25-29

Example 3.6 - "Elegie 1943" mm. 39-43

After two pieces with relatively little rhythmic instability (“Die Heimat” and “An eine Stadt”), Eisler returns to the offbeat vocal entrances of “An die Hoffnung” in the opening phrase of “Erinnerung,” setting up a strong contrast with the even 6/8 rhythms of the song’s latter half.

In addition to carrying over rhythmic elements of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, Eisler also incorporates their dissonant atonality into the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*. As in the

Anacreon settings, Eisler adjusts the degree of dissonance to match the level of emotional distress in the text, not just from piece to piece, but also from section to section within each piece. Allusions to tonality abound in the Hölderlin settings (much more strongly than in the Anacreon), culminating in fully realized diatonicism by the end of “Erinnerung.” The most thoroughly dissonant piece of the six Hölderlin songs is “An die Hoffnung.” The opening sections of “Andenken,” “Elegie 1943,” “Die Heimat,” and “Erinnerung” are also highly chromatic and dissonant, but soften to more consonant harmonic and melodic material as each piece develops. These opening sections are richly layered, combining highly chromatic melodic lines containing all twelve tones of the chromatic scale with triadic chords and arpeggios, the result of which is a harmonic language that falls somewhere between Schoenberg’s twelve-tone technique and late-Romantic tonality.

The allusions to tonality are based on elements of functional harmony, rooted firmly in the triad. Eisler employs a quasi-mode mixture technique in many of these songs, composing melodic lines that constantly alternate between major and minor thirds, often in sequential passages; this mode mixture recalls the chromatic tonality of late-Romanticism without the realization of that tonality in the underlying harmonies. The use of the third as a foundational component also allows Eisler to borrow from other twentieth-century harmonic soundscapes, most notably Impressionism, utilizing higher-tertian chords in the dreamy remembrance of “Andenken” and “An eine Stadt,” further underscoring the tonal ambiguity. As observed in the Anacreon songs, this tonal ambiguity sets up certain harmonic expectations that are never realized, frustrating the listener’s longing for tonal closure – until “Erinnerung,” where we get the rare



satisfaction of harmonic resolution and tonal closure. Unlike the Anacreon settings, though, the moments of tonal allusion are longer and stronger, creating a link between the familiarity of tonal convention and the comfort of memory and promise of hope; there is a connection between the tonal expectation of Eisler's harmonic writing and the expectation of arriving at a better future. The movement from the dissonance of "An die Hoffnung" to the unambiguously diatonic consonance of "Erinnerung" represents the progression of Eisler's hope. It moves out of the darkness so vividly depicted in "An die Hoffnung" – and on a larger scale, from the bitterness of the Anacreon songs – into the light of knowledge, art, and beauty.

The progression from and relationship between dissonance and consonance, despair and hope, can be observed in the motivic connections Eisler makes throughout the Hölderlin cycle. While there may be a large number of melodic motives spread across this cycle, two stand out as noteworthy. The first embodies the major/minor third mode-mixture mentioned earlier, and is used as a foundational building block in the last two songs, "An eine Stadt" and "Erinnerung," to signal major musical and textual arrival points within each piece. In "An eine Stadt" the motive is the first thing the listener hears, clearly stated in the vocal entrance in m. 1; after some melodic development and modification, it is picked up by the piano interlude in m. 13, and is then restated in the voice at the beginning of Eisler's strophes 3 and 5 (Example 3.7). The piano returns to the motive one final time in the postlude. "Erinnerung" uses the motive as a major melodic component, in a manner similar to "An eine Stadt." Unlike "An eine Stadt," though, which begins with the motive, "Erinnerung" does not make use of it until until m. 28, halfway through the piece, when the harmonic writing finally becomes more

consonant/diatonic and the meter settles into 6/8 (Example 3.8). After the initial statement and ensuing development, the motive is restated in m. 39, and is finally taken over by the piano postlude, which carries it to the end of the piece.

Example 3.7 - "An eine Stadt" mm. 1-2

mm. 39-40

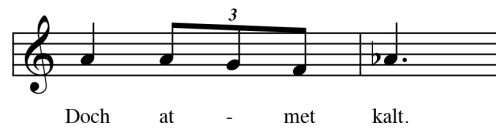
mm. 62-63

Example 3.8 - "Erinnerung" mm. 28-29

mm. 39-40

In addition to the prominent structural role this motive plays in “An eine Stadt” and “Erinnerung,” it also appears briefly in two other songs of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* – “An die Hoffnung” and “Andenken” – precisely at the moment that both of those pieces

turn from chromatic dissonance towards more triadic, quasi-tonal harmonies.<sup>80</sup> The statement in “An die Hoffnung” is brief, iterated just once (Example 3.9).



**Example 3.9 - "An die Hoffnung" mm. 10-11**

The appearance of this motive in the vocal line of “Andenken” is more involved, where it serves as the basis for an ascending sequence that recalls the expansive grandeur of the Garonne (Example 3.10).

The image shows a two-staff musical score. The top staff is for the vocal line, and the bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The vocal line starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a triplet of eighth notes (B4, C5, D5). The lyrics 'Geh a - ber nun, grü - ße die schö - ne Ga - ron - ne und die Gär - ten von Bor - deaux,' are written below the vocal line. Performance instructions include 'più mosso, etwas fließende' above the first measure, 'mf' above the second measure, and 'etwas drängend, aber sehr diskret!' above the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment begins with a piano (p) dynamic and features a series of ascending and descending eighth-note patterns.

**Example 3.10 - "Andenken" mm. 9-15**

This motive does more than just forge a musical link across the cycle; in the case of “An eine Stadt” it contributes to another anomaly in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, namely the use of a closed form. In the discussion of Eisler’s text adaptation for “An eine Stadt,” connections to Vienna were made based on the title change and the dedication to

<sup>80</sup> This motive also surfaces briefly in two songs of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*: in the final vocal phrase of “Geselligkeit betreffend” (mm. ) and at the end of “In der Frühe” (mm. 22-23, 26-27). This motivic connection, particularly between “In der Frühe” and “Erinnerung,” suggests more significant large-scale thematic intentions, which, due to the limited length of this document must be shelved for later discussion.

Schubert. Vienna also represented musical tradition for Eisler, and in “An eine Stadt” he returns to a formal structure common in the Viennese Classical period – ABACA rondo form – as another tribute to his home. As seen in Example 21 above, each statement of the motive marks the start or return of the A section. The melody of the A section, based on the mode-mixture motive and supported by steady chordal quarter notes in the accompaniment, has a beauty and ease well suited to fond recollections of a city dear to Eisler’s heart. The vocal line sits comfortably in the middle of the voice, never straining to high or low, complimenting the beauty of the melodic and rhythmic material. The contrast between the A sections and the B and C sections can be heard in the perceived tempi (the middle sections have faster-moving notes in the vocal line and even more so in the piano), and in the tessitura – both B and C sections sit higher, centered around D-flat.

The second important motivic connection in the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* connects the opening of “An die Hoffnung” to the opening of “Erinnerung,” providing a strong link between the absence of hope in the first song and the renewal of hope in the final song, particularly as the latter starts with the same chromaticism but then moves far, far away from it. Both pieces begin *a capella*, “An die Hoffnung” on the words “O Hoffnung!” (“O hope!”) set to the descending pitches  $b_b - c_b - b_b$  (Example 3.11).



**Example 3.11-** "An die Hoffnung" m. 1

When the motive reappears at the beginning of “Erinnerung,” Eisler extends it, filling in the chromatic space between the three pitches (Example 3.12).



**Example 3.12 - "Erinnerung" mm. 1-3**

The piano writing in the first two measures also recalls the imitative opening of “Die Heimat,” creating another link to the past, to the memories of the earlier songs. By linking “An die Hoffnung” and “Erinnerung” with this downward major seventh motive, Eisler bookends the cycle with the opening of the two songs; the remainder of “Erinnerung” therefore functions as an afterthought, a postlude to the rest of the cycle, both harmonically and thematically. It looks forward rather than back, full of hope in the future.

## TONAL DESTABILIZATION AND RESOLUTION

Throughout the *Anakreontische* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, and even throughout the entire *Hollywood Liederbuch*, it is Eisler’s endings that capture the unpredictability of the exile experience; the lack of harmonic resolution at the end of each piece reflects the exile’s uncertainty, fear, and anxiety. No matter the degree to which any given piece alludes to tonality, the end serves to destabilize the expectation of harmonic resolution. Eisler uses a variety of techniques to achieve this destabilization. Well-constructed voice leading allows Eisler to set up tonal conventions from which he can then deviate. The allusions to tonality are stronger in the Hölderlin songs than in the Anacreon; therefore when Eisler fails to resolve harmonic movement as expected, the resulting tonal

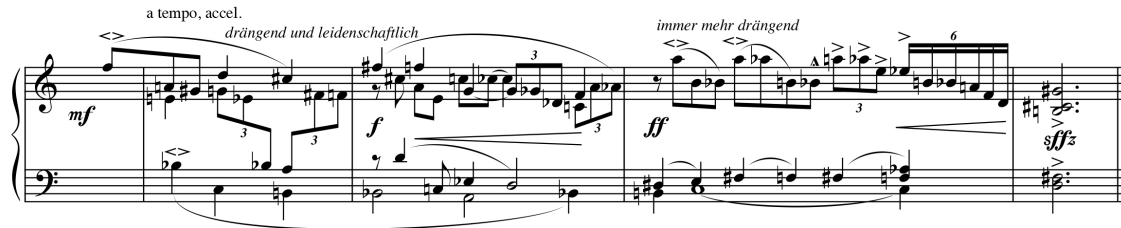
destabilization has a greater impact. Just as in the Anacreon settings, the darker moments – difficult memories, loss of hope – are set to more dissonant harmonies, while the lighter moments – pleasant remembrances, hope for the future – are reflected in more consonant writing, full of triadic harmonies; in the case of “Erinnerung,” Eisler takes the notion of consonant harmonic language all the way to unambiguous diatonicism, while still maintaining his own very unique voice. With greater expectations of resolution, the piano postludes that end each piece play a more significant role in meeting or frustrating that expectation. The postludes are constructed in one of two ways: a recapitulation of the prelude or opening vocal line (as in “An die Hoffnung,” “Elegie 1943,” “Die Heimat,” and “An eine Stadt”); or the continuation of a melodic element from the final vocal statement (as in “Andenken” and “Erinnerung”). In both cases, the final chord or gesture of the postlude serves to disrupt any potential resolution through the use of dissonant clusters, open-ended harmonic movement, violent chords, and/or dynamic shock.<sup>81</sup>

“An die Hoffnung” introduces the dissonant cluster as one foil to resolution. The piece begins with an undulating vocal line, comprised of large skips (particularly downward minor sevenths) followed by descending half-steps. This is mirrored in the descending figures of the piano, which uses extended statements of the opening motive as the basis for the contrapuntal accompaniment. Due to the high level of chromaticism, harmonic instability pervades this piece, even when the accompaniment becomes primarily triadic and chordal in mm. 9-16. The final vocal phrase, “...und schon gesanglos schlummert das schauernde Herz.” (mm. 17-18), vaguely outlines a d-minor descending arpeggio, but as the final word ends, Eisler immediately returns to

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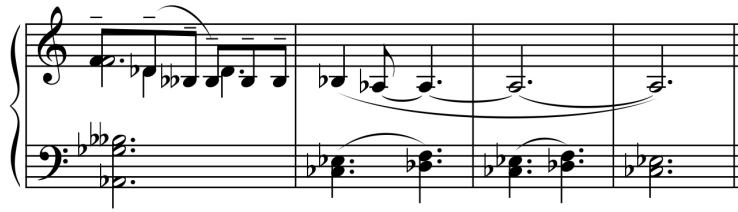
<sup>81</sup> Eisler also incorporated other ending techniques in the *Hollywood Liederbuch*, including broken off motor rhythms, unresolved suspensions, and unfolding dissonances.

the opening motive, developing it into a frenzy of descending sevenths and seconds that concludes with the dissonant cluster  $d\flat - f\sharp - b\flat - c\sharp - g\sharp$  seen in Example 3.13.

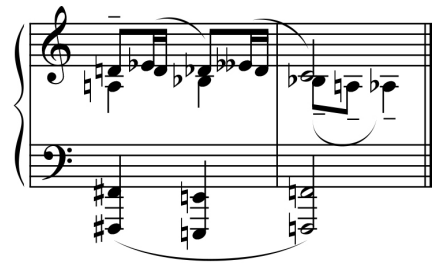


Example 3.13 - "An die Hoffnung" mm. 18-21

In contrast to the rash finality of “An die Hoffnung,” the lack of resolution in “Andenken” and “Elegie 1943” comes through open-ended chords that have no feeling of finality whatsoever. Despite the fact that both pieces end on consonant, minor triads – “Andenken” ends on a first-inversion A-flat minor chord, and “Elegie 1943” ends on a root-position F-minor chord – Eisler’s voice leading sets up a harmonic resolution that never comes. “Andenken” strongly alludes to tonality – more than “An die Hoffnung” and certainly more than anything in the *Anakreontische Fragmente* – but due to the constantly shifting higher-tertian chords, a tonal center is elusive. By m. 30, the piano accompaniment settles into a rocking pattern, alternating between an A-flatM7 chord and a first-inversion C-flatM7 chord. Through a series of descending melodic whole-tone arpeggios in both the voice and piano parts, Eisler rearranges the harmonies around A-flat, quickly dispelling any sense of a tonal center. While the A-flat presence continues through the seven-measure piano postlude, which quotes the vocal melody from mm. 30-32, the final sustained A-flat in the right hand feels like an outlying pitch due to the shifting chords underneath – neither the first-inversion A-flat minor chord nor the root-position D-flat major chord have any harmonic finality (Examples 3.14 and 3.15).



Example 3.14 - "Andenken" ending, mm. 47-50



Example 3.15 - "Elegie 1943" ending, mm. 63-64

There is finality of a much different sort in “Die Heimat” and “An eine Stadt” that sets them apart from the other Hölderlin songs. Both songs employ delayed cadences in the last phrase of the vocal line, and violent final chords that shock the listener out of the tenuous harmonic calm established in both pieces. The delayed cadence is both rhythmic and harmonic in its function, serving to prolong the anticipated resolution of the vocal line through the insertion of a measure of vocal rest before the final word of the piece. It briefly recalls the open-endedness of “Andenken” and “Elegie 1943,” forcing the audience to hold its breath until, one measure later, the last word falls. In “Die Heimat,” the extra measure inserted in the phrase gives Eisler the opportunity to shift the harmony slightly, lowering the bass note of the left-hand chord by a half step and introducing the descending augmented octave leap in the right hand as a melodic lament gesture. It also, obviously, draws out the delivery of the text, “ach gebt ihr mir...die Ruhe noch einmal



wieder.” (“*ah give me... peace once again*”), delaying not only melodic and harmonic resolution, but the textual resolution, as well (Example 3.16).

die Ru - he noch ein - mal wie - der.

*p sub.*

Example 3.16 - "Die Heimat" delayed vocal cadence, mm. 21-24

The measure of rest heightens the feeling of resolution and arrival on the final word, lulling the listener into a false sense of security by making the peace mentioned in the text seem attainable. But Eisler clearly has other designs, and shocks the audience out of their sense of comfort with the abrupt *forte* return of the opening descending arpeggio and the *sforzandissimo* chord underneath it (Example 3.17).

rasch

*f*

*sffz*

Example 3.17 - "Die Heimat" piano postlude, mm. 25-27

The shock of this moment is amplified by the steady increase of tonal allusions throughout “Die Heimat.” Voice leading is again a key factor in establishing the tenuous

sense of a tonal center, particularly in mm. 16-25 as the vocal line floats above a rolling arpeggiated piano part and the harmonies become increasingly triadic and consonant.

In “An eine Stadt,” Eisler employs the same destabilizing techniques that were used in “Die Heimat,” but with slightly different results. The delayed cadence creates the same suspension of textual resolution; but where the measure of vocal rest in “Die Heimat” extends the musical phrase, the same measure of rest in “An eine Stadt” fits into the predetermined phrase structure of the rondo form, which means there is no alteration of the harmonic progression or phrase length (Example 3.18). Eisler very creatively uses musical elements to underscore a moment of textual (and here I mean textural structure, not content) tension and resolution.

dei-ne fröh - li - chen Gas - sen — un - ter duf - ten - den Gär - ten ruhn.

Example 3.18- "An eine Stadt" mm. 69-73

Just as “Die Heimat” closes with a violent chord, so does “An eine Stadt.” What makes the violent ending of “An eine Stadt” so shocking is the context in which that ending comes. While the postlude of “Die Heimat” is unexpected, the piece is a lament, full of sorrow and misery; “An eine Stadt” is the opposite. It is a fond recollection of a beautiful city, one full of life and surrounded by stunning vistas. The form aids in grounding the piece in B-flat with each return of the A section, and reinforces the

predictability of the harmonic progression. The jazz-influenced harmonies create an atmosphere of relaxed observance and remembrance that is, in Eisler's own words, "cool, polite, [and] gentle."<sup>82</sup> The gentleness is extended all the way to the end of the postlude, where, in the final measure, its peace is utterly destroyed (Example 3.19). The promise of B-flat Eisler makes throughout the piece, and its *pianissimo* resolution, is shattered in the final measure by a *sforzandissimo* D-flat minor chord – an abrupt awakening to the reality that he is not in that city he loves, that he may never return, and that even if he does return, there may be little left of its peacefulness and beauty.



Example 3.19 - "An eine Stadt" mm. 74-83

After the traumatic ending of "An eine Stadt," the closure presented in "Erinnerung" stands out as an anomaly, not just among the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, but the entire *Hollywood Liederbuch*, as well. After a dissonant atonal opening in which the singer invokes the fatherland (the most problematic part of the text due to Nazi coopting), and period of asymmetrical rhythmic figures and harmonic fluidity during which the

<sup>82</sup> Bunge, 203.

singer describes the abuses the fatherland has suffered, the promise of tonality is fulfilled in m. 28, when the text begins to speak of Germany's beauty and potential. Voice leading and treatment of dissonance and consonance follow tonal conventions, setting up the expectation of F as tonal center, and for once, Eisler does not disappoint the listener. He incorporates the mode-mixture motive from earlier songs, which allows him to maintain a degree of harmonic uncertainty with movement between F-major and F-minor. This harmonic tentativeness reflects the cautious optimism in the text, and is carried through the piano postlude to the end of the piece (Example 3.20), where Eisler ultimately sees the future as positive, and ends on a root-position F-major chord. The fact that he sustains the diatonicism through the entire latter half of the piece and ends on a root-position tonic chord is still shocking to me. After years of studying and singing these pieces, this ending is more of a surprise than all of the others whose resolutions are thwarted.



Example 3.20 - "Erinnerung" mm. 49-56

As an amalgamation of the textual and musical themes of the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, "Erinnerung" captures the lingering uncertainty of Eisler's exile, while also

representing the power of hope over the bitterness of despair. As the conclusion to the *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, “Erinnerung” provides a counterbalance to the sadness and loss of “In der Frühe” at the end of the *Anakreontische Fragmente*, where the singer weeps for his poor homeland. Here, Eisler celebrates that homeland and expresses his confidence in the bright future of its society, one in which he hopes “it will be possible to live safely and well.” As he says, “It is with confidence in such a society that these pieces are written.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Eisler, *Hollywood Liederbuch*, 99.

## CONCLUSION

*...I sought out verses with poetic beauty. But the only poetic beauty for me is usefulness, spiritual usefulness.*

- Hanns Eisler

The pervasive textual and musical non-resolution of the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente* speaks to Eisler's own uncertainty, but also to his hope for change and improvement. The lack of resolution and subsequent despair of the *Anakreontische Fragmente* is still just that – a lack of resolution. Eisler's settings of Anacreon imply that there can be no true or satisfactory resolution and that therein lies the despair. But the *Hölderlin-Fragmente* speak to something different, suggesting, albeit cautiously, that the individual hope for resolution of the exile's displacement, as well as the larger hope in society's potential to change, are within reach.

In examining the significance of the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, two seemingly opposing elements must be reconciled: the narrative of Eisler as the heavy-handed musicopolitical composer; and the narrative of lyric poetry as a genre narrowly focused on the individual, withdrawn from the 'real world' of everyday society – a genre that requires the poet to retreat into an "ivory tower"<sup>84</sup> of solitude. But these reductive views of lyric poetry and of Eisler's role as political musician do not account for the songs of the fragment cycles. Eisler does not function solely as a composer of "Kampflieder" or political film scores. Many of his works, including the *Hollywood Liederbuch* and much of his instrumental music, contain less overt, or are

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<sup>84</sup> Brecht, *Arbeitsjournal*, 406.

completely devoid of, political messaging. Conversely, lyric poetry does not exist in an aesthetic realm divorced from society. It can and, more often than not, does function as a vehicle for social change, rather than disengaged, self-indulgent musings of a lyric poet alone in the wilderness.

While the *Hollywood Liederbuch* is less overtly political than many of Eisler's other works, the search for resolution and desire for change that weaves its way through the *Hollywood Liederbuch* is not entirely devoid of the political. The lyric poems Eisler selected for the *Liederbuch*, and particularly the texts he created for the *Anakreontische Fragmente* and *Hölderlin-Fragmente*, seek a change of circumstances that can come about only through a shift in political power. Eisler's act of adapting and setting the texts for these two cycles was, in fact, a simultaneous withdrawal from and engagement with society, one in which he expresses the hopes and fears of society by honestly confronting those hopes and fears in his own life. Eisler's friend, colleague, and fellow exile, Theodor Adorno, explores the idea of universality found within the individuality of lyric poetry in his essay, "On Lyric Poetry and Society." He writes,

It is commonly said that a perfect lyric poem must possess totality or universality, must provide the whole within the bounds of the poem and the infinite within the poem's finitude. If that is to be more than a platitude of an aesthetics that is always ready to use the concept of the symbolic as a panacea, it indicates that in every lyric poem the historical relationship of the subject to objectivity, of the individual to society, must have found its precipitate in the medium of a subjective spirit thrown back upon itself. The less the work thematizes the relationship of "I" and society, the more spontaneously it crystallizes of its own accord in the poem, the more complete this process of precipitation will be.<sup>85</sup>

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85 Theodor Adorno, "On Lyric Poetry and Society," *Notes to Literature, Vol. 1*, edited by Rolf Tiedemann, translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 42.

Paradoxically, Adorno suggests, this individuality and personal specificity do not empty the lyric poem of a broader social or political relevance. His observations imply that the more the poet honestly and humanly expresses the viewpoint of the individual without emphasizing its individuality, the more accessible, universal, and relevant its message becomes. Adorno notes, “The universality of the lyric's substance...is social in nature. Only one who hears the voice of humankind in the poem's solitude can understand what the poem is saying,”<sup>86</sup>

It is such humanity that allows Eisler's text adaptations and nuanced music settings to simultaneously convey the individuality and universality of his exile experience. The contemporary relevance of the songs is in many ways secondary to – or at least a result of – their personal honesty, and it is this honesty that engages the audience. Eisler was also surely aware of the fact that his songs would connect with listeners not only through his adaptations and musical settings, but also because of the cultural history and significance of the original works he adapted. They are at once his own texts, dealing with his exile experience, and at the same time they have a history, an established cultural significance, that deepens their broad appeal. The synthesis of the words of earlier artistic exiles with Eisler's poetic and musical skills reveals not only his individual voice, but a voice that conveys a broader, more universal sense of purpose and, thus, hope.

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<sup>86</sup> Adorno, 38.



## APPENDIX I

### Side-by-side comparison of Anacreon/Mörike texts with Eisler's adaptations

As noted in chapter two, Eisler's changes are indicated in the following ways: cuts to the original text are indicated with brackets; additions, replacement text, and changes to word order are underlined.

#### *Anakreontische Fragmente*

##### ANACREON/MÖRIKE

###### **Fragments 38, 39, & 40 (Anacreon/Mörike)**

**38**

Der sei nicht mein Genoß, der mir zum Weine beim vollen Becher vom Fehden erzählt und von dem leidigen Krieg;

Vielmehr der in geselligem Frohsinn gerne der Musen Und Aphrodites holdseliger Gaben gedenkt.

**39**

Nicht nach der Thrakerin mehr neigt sich verlangend mein Herz.

**40**

Zum Weintrinker gemacht bin ich.

###### **Fragment 54 (Anacreon/Mörike)**

Dir auch wurde, Kleanorides,  
Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödtlich;  
dich schreckte der Süd nimmer, der winterlich stürmt.  
So fing dich die betrüglische Jahreszeit ein, und strömend  
Spülten die Wogen den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinweg.

###### **Fragment 37 (Anacreon/Mörike)**

Grau bereits sind meine Schläfe,  
und das Haupt ist weiß geworden,  
Hin, dahin die holde Jugend;  
schon gealtert sind die Zähne.

Von dem süßen Leben ist mir nur  
ein Restchen Zeit noch übrig.  
Oft mit Tränen dieß bejammr' ich,  
vor dem Tartaros erbebend.

Denn entsetzlich ist des Hades Tiefe,  
leidvoll seine Straße,  
Offen stets der Stieg, hinunter,  
nimmermehr herauf zu gehen.

##### EISLER

###### **I. Geselligkeit betreffend (Eisler)**

Der sei nicht mein Genoß, der mir zum Wein beim vollen Becher nicht vom Fehden erzählt und nicht vom leidigen Krieg;

Sondern vielmehr [...] in geselligem Frohsinn schwelgt und gerne von den Musen

Und Aphrodites holdseligen Gaben mir schwätzt.

Nicht nach der Thrakerin [...] neigt sich verlangend mein Herz.

Denn zum Weintrinker bin ich gemacht.

###### **II. (Eisler)**

Dir auch wurde [...]

Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödtlich.

Dich schreckte der Süd nimmer, der winterlich stürmt.

So fing dich die betrüglische Jahreszeit ein, und strömend  
Spülten die Wogen den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinab.

###### **III. Die Unwürde des Alerns (Eisler)**

Grau bereits sind meine Schläfen,  
und das Haupt ist weiß geworden,  
Hin, dahin die holde Jugend;  
schon gealtert sind die Zähne.

Von dem süßen Leben ist mir nur  
ein Restchen Zeit geblieben.  
Oft mit Tränen dies bedaur' ich,  
vor dem Tartaros erbebend.

Denn entsetzlich ist des Hades Tiefe,  
leidvoll seine Straße,  
Offen steht der Stieg hinunter,  
nimmermehr herauf zu gehen.

**Fragment 10 (Anacreon/Mörike)**

Eurypyle liebt, die blonde, jetzt  
Den vielbeleckten Artemon.

Trag er den Wollgugel doch einst,  
jene geschnürte Wespenform,  
Hölzernes Ohrwürfelgehäng',  
und um die Rippen zog er sich  
Ein kahles Ochsenfell, von Schmutz klebend,  
ein alt Schildfutteral;  
und mit der Brotverkäuferin  
Trieb er's und mannssüchtigen Weibsstücken,  
der schlechte Artemon.  
Unsauber ganz war sein Erwerb.  
Oft in dem Block lag sein Genick,  
desgleichen oft im Rad,  
und oft auch mit dem Zuchtriemen gepeitscht ward er,  
und hundertmal am Schopf geschändet  
und sein Bart berupft.  
Jetzo den Prachtwagen besteigt er,  
und es trägt der Sohn Kykes  
Gold in den Ohr'n, schattendes Dach,  
zierlich gestielt aus Elfenbein,  
Als wie ein Weib...

**Fragments 7 & 15 (Anacreon/Mörike)****7**

Vom Dünnkuchen zum Morgenbrot  
Erst ein Stückchen mir brach ich;  
Trank auch Wein einen Krug dazu;  
Und zur zärtlichen Laute  
Greif' ich jetzo, dem zartesten  
Kind ein Ständchen zu bringen.

**15**

Mein arm heimatlich Land  
werd' ich denn wiedersehn.

**IV. Später Triumph (Eisler)**

[...]

Und um die Rippen zog er sich  
Ein kahles Ochsenfell, von Schmutz starrend,  
ein altes Schildfutteral.  
Und mit der Brotverkäuferin trieb er's  
und mit den mannssüchtigen Weibsstücken,  
den schmutzigsten.  
Unsauber ganz war sein Gewerbe.  
Oft in dem Block war sein Genick,  
desgleichen oft im Rad.  
Und oft auch mit [...] Zuchtruten gepeitscht ward er.  
Und [...] auch am Kopf geschändet  
und sein Bart gerupft.  
Und jetzt? Und jetzt? Den Prachtwagen besteigt er.  
[...]

**In der Frühe (Eisler)**

Vom Dünnkuchen zum Morgenbrot  
Erst ein Stücklein mir brach ich;  
Trank auch einen Krug voll Wein dazu;  
Und zur zärtlichen Laute  
jetzo greif' ich. [...]

Mein arm heimatlich Land,  
wann werde ich dich wiedersehn.  
Mein arm heimatlich Land.

## APPENDIX II

### Side-by-side comparison of Hölderlin texts with Eisler's adaptations

#### *Hölderlin-Fragmente*

##### HÖLDERLIN

###### **An die Hoffnung (Hölderlin)**

O Hoffnung! holde! gütiggeschaffte!  
Die du das Haus der Trauernden nicht verschmähst,  
Und gerne dienend, Edle! zwischen  
Sterblichen waltest und Himmelsmächten,

Wo bist du? wenig lebt' ich; doch athmet kalt  
Mein Abend schon. Und stille, den Schatten gleich,  
Bin ich schon hier; und schon gesanglos  
Schlummert das schauernde Herz im Busen.

Im grünen Thale, dort, wo der frische Quell  
Vom Berge täglich rauscht, und die liebliche  
Zeitlose mir am Herbsttag aufblüht,  
Dort, in der Stille, du Holde, will ich

Dich suchen, oder wenn in der Mitternacht  
Das unsichtbare Leben im Haine wallt,  
Und über mir die immerfrohen  
Blumen, die blühenden Sterne, glänzen,

O du des Aethers Tochter! erscheine dann  
Aus deines Vaters Gärten, und darfst du nicht  
Ein Geist der Erde, kommen, schräk', o  
Schröke mit anderem nur das Herz mir.

###### **Andenken (Hölderlin)**

Der Nordost wehet,  
Der liebste unter den Winden  
Mir, weil er feurigen Geist  
Und gute Fahrt verheißet den Schiffen.  
Geh aber nun und grüße  
Die schöne Garonne,  
Und die Gärten von Bourdeaux  
Dort, wo am scharfen Ufer  
Hingehet der Steg und in den Strom  
Tief fällt der Bach, darüber aber  
Hinschauet ein edel Paar  
Von Eichen und Silberpappeln;

##### EISLER

###### **An die Hoffnung (Eisler)**

O Hoffnung! Holde, gütiggeschaffte!  
Die du das Haus der Trauernden nicht verschmähst,  
Und gerne dienend [...] zwischen  
den Sterblichen waltest: [...]

Wo bist du? Wo bist du? wenig lebt' ich; doch atmet kalt  
mein Abend schon. Und stille, den Schatten gleich,  
Bin ich schon hier. Und schon gesanglos  
Schlummert das schauernde Herz [...].

[...]

###### **Andenken (Eisler)**

Der Nordost wehet,  
Der liebste unter den Winden  
mir, weil er [...]  
gute Fahrt verheißet [...].  
Geh aber nun, [...] grüße  
die schöne Garonne  
und die Gärten von Bourdeaux,  
dort, wo am scharfen Ufer  
hingehet der Steg und in den Strom  
tief fällt der Bach, darüber aber  
hinschauet ein edel Paar  
von Eichen und Silberpappeln.

Noch denket das mir wohl und wie  
 Die breiten Gipfel neiget  
 Der Ulmwald, über die Mühl',  
 Im Hofe aber wächst ein Feigenbaum.  
 An Feiertagen gehn  
 Die braunen Frauen daselbst  
 Auf seidnen Boden,  
 Zur Märzenzeit,  
 Wenn gleich ist Nacht und Tag,  
 Und über langsamen Stegen,  
 Von goldenen Träumen schwer,  
 Einwiegende Lüfte ziehen.

Es reiche aber,  
 Des dunkeln Lichtes voll,  
 Mir einer den duftenden Becher,  
 Damit ich ruhen moge; denn süß  
 Wä'r unter Schatten der Schlummer.  
 Nicht ist es gut,  
 Seellos von sterblichen  
 Gedanken zu seyn. Doch gut  
 Ist ein Gespräch und zu sagen  
 Des Herzens Meinung, zu hören viel  
 Von Tagen der Lieb',  
 Und Thaten, welche geschehen.

Wo aber sind die Freunde? Bellarmin  
 Mit dem Gefährten? Mancher  
 Trägt Scheue, an die Que lie zu gehn;  
 Es beginnet nemlich der Reichtum  
 Im Meere. Sie,  
 Wie Mahler, bringen zusammen  
 Das Schöne der Erd' und verschmähn  
 Den geflügelten Krieg nicht, und  
 Zu wohnen einsam, jahrlang, unter  
 Dem entlaubten Mast, wo nicht die Nacht durchglänzen  
 Die Feiertage der Stadt,  
 Und Saitenspiel und eingeborener Tanz nicht.

Nun aber sind zu Indiern  
 Die Männer gegangen,  
 Dort an der luftigen Spiz'  
 An Traubenbergen, wo herab  
 Die Dordogne kommt,  
 Und zusammen mit der prächt'gen  
 Garonne meerbreit  
 Ausgeht der Strom. Es nehmet aber  
 Und giebt Gedächtniß die See,  
 Und die Lieb' auch heftet fleißig die Augen,  
 Was bleibt aber, stiften die Dichter.

#### **Der Frieden (Hölderlin)**

Wie wenn die alten Wasser, die in andern Zorn  
 In schrecklichern verwandelt wieder  
 Kämen, zu reinigen, da es noth war,

So gählt und wuchs und woogte von Jahr zu Jahr  
 Rastlos und überschwemmte das bange Land  
 Die unerhörte Schlacht, daß weit hüllt  
 Dunkel und Blässe das Haupt der Menschen.

[...]

An Feiertagen gehn  
 Die braunen Frauen daselbst  
 Auf seidnen Boden,  
 Zur Märzenzeit,  
 Wenn gleich ist Tag und Nacht,  
 Und über langsamen Stegen,  
 Von goldenen Träumen schwer,  
 Einwiegende Lüfte ziehen.

[...]

#### **Elegie 1943 (Eisler)**

Wie wenn die alten Wasser, [...] in andern Zorn,  
 in schrecklichern verwandelt wieder kämen,  
 [...]

So gärt' und wuchs und wogte von Jahr zu Jahr  
 [...] die unerhörte Schlacht, daß weit hüllt in  
 Dunkel und Blässe das Haupt der Menschen.

Die Heldenkräfte flogen, wie Wellen, auf  
Und schwanden weg, du kürztest o Rächerin!  
Den Dienern oft die Arbeit schnell und  
Brach test in Ruhe sie heim, die Streiter.

O du die unerbittlich und unbesiegt  
Den Feigern und den Übergewaltgen trifft,  
Daß bis ins letzte Glied hinab vom  
Schlage sein armes Geschlecht erzittert,

Die du geheim den Stachel und Zügel hältst  
Zu hemmen und zu fördern, o Nemesis,  
Strafst du die Todten noch, es schliefen  
Unter Italiens Lorbeergärten

Sonst ungestört die alten Eroberer.  
Und schonst du auch des müßigen Hirten nicht,  
Und haben endlich wohl genug den  
Üppigen Schlummer gebüßt die Völker?

Wer hub es an? wer brachte den Fluch? von heut  
Ist nicht und nicht von gestern, und die zuerst  
Das Maas verloren, unsre Väter  
Wußten es nicht, und es trieb ihr Geist sie.

Zu lang, zu lang schon treten die Sterblichen  
Sich gern aufs Haupt, und zanken um Herrschaft sich,  
Den Nachbar fürchtend, und es hat auf  
Eigenem Boden der Mann nicht Seegen.

Und unstät wehn und irren, dem Chaos gleich,  
Dem gährenden Geschlechte die Wünsche noch  
Umher und wild ist und verzagt und kalt von  
Sorgen das Leben der Armen immer.

Du aber wandelst ruhig die sichere Bahn  
O Mutter Erd im Lichte. Dein Frühling blüht,  
Melodischwechselnd gehn dir hin die  
Wachsenden Zeiten, du Lebensreiche!

Komm du nun, du der heiligen Musen all,  
Und der Gestirne Liebling, verjüngender  
Ersehnter Friede, komm und gieb ein  
Bleiben im Leben, ein Herz uns wieder.

Unschuldiger! sind klüger die Kinder doch  
Beinahe, denn wir Alten; es irrt der Zwist  
Den Guten nicht den Sinn, und klar und  
Freudig ist ihnen ihr Auge geblieben.

Und wie mit andern Schauenden lächelnd ernst  
Der Richter auf der Jünglinge Rennbahn sieht,  
Wo glühender die Kampfenden die  
Wagen in staubende Wolken treiben,

So steht und lächelt Helios über uns  
Und einsam ist der Gottliche, Frohe nie,  
Denn ewig wohnen sie, des Aethers  
Blühende Sterne, die Heiligfreien.

[...] Wer brachte den Fluch? Von heut  
ist er nicht und nicht von gestern. Und die zuerst  
das Maß verloren, unsre Väter  
wußten es nicht. [...]

Zu lang, zu lang schon treten die Sterblichen  
sich gern aufs Haupt, [...] den Nachbar fürchtend. [...]

Und unstet, irren und wirren, dem Chaos gleich,  
dem gährenden Geschlecht die Wünsche nach  
[...] und wild ist und verzagt und kalt von  
Sorgen das Leben. [...]

[...]

### Die Heimat (Hölderlin)

Froh kehrt der Schiffer heim an den stillen Strom  
Von fernen Inseln, wo er geerndtet hat;  
Wohl möcht' auch ich zur Heimath wieder;  
Aber was hab' ich, wie Leid, geerndtet? –

Ihr holden Ufer, die ihr mich auferzogt,  
Stillt ihr der Liebe Laiden? ach! gebt ihr mir,  
Ihr Wälder meiner Kindheit, wann ich  
Komme, die Ruhe noch Einmal wieder?

### Heidelberg (Hölderlin)

Lange lieb' ich dich schon, möchte dich, mir zur Lust,  
Mutter nennen, und dir schenken ein kunstlos Lied,  
Du, der Vaterlandsstädte  
Ländlichschönste, so viel ich sah.

Wie der Vogel des Walds über die Gipfel fliegt,  
Schwingt sich über den Strom, wo er vorbei dir glänzt  
Leicht und kräftig die Brücke,  
Die von Wagen und Menschen tönt.

Wie von Göttern gesandt, fesselt' ein Zauber einst  
Auf die Brücke mich an, da ich vorüber gieng,  
Und herein in die Berge  
Mir die reizende Ferne schien,

Und der Jüngling, der Strom, fort in die Ebne zog,  
Traurigfroh, wie das Herz, wenn es, sich selbst zu schön,  
Liebend unterzugehen,  
In die Fluthen der Zeit sich wirft .

Quellen hattest du ihm, hattest dem Flüchtigen  
Kühle Schatten geschenkt, und die Gestade sahn  
All' ihm nach, und es bebte  
Aus den Wellen ihr lieblich Bild.

Aber schwer in das Thal hieng die gigantische,  
Schiksaalskundige Burg nieder his auf den Grund,  
Von den Wettern zerrissen ;  
Doch die ewige Sonne goß

Ihr verjüngendes Licht über das alternde  
Riesenbild, und umher grünte lebendiger  
Epheu; freundliche Wälder  
Rauschten über die Burg herab.

Sträucher blühten herab, bis wo im heitern Thal,  
An den Hügel gelehnt, oder dem Ufer hold ,  
Deine fröhlichen Gassen  
Unter duftenden Gärten ruhn.

### Die Heimat (Eisler)

Froh kehrt der Schiffer heim an die hellen Strome  
von fernen Inseln, wo er geerntet hat.  
Wohl möchte [...] ich gern zur Heimat wieder.  
Ach was hab' ich, wie Leid, geerntet.

Ihr holden Ufer, die ihr mich auferzogt,  
[...] ach gebt ihr mir,  
ihr Wälder meiner Kindheit, wann ich  
wiederkehre, die Ruhe noch einmal wieder.

### An eine Stadt (Eisler)

Lange lieb ich dich schon, möchte dich, mir zur Lust,  
Mutter nennen, und dir schenken ein kunstloses Lied,  
Du, der Vaterlandsstädte  
ländlichschönste, so viel ich sah.

Wie der Vogel des Walds über die Gipfel fliegt,  
schwingt sich über den Strom, wo er vorbei dir glänzt  
leicht und kräftig die Brücke,  
die von Wagen und Menschen tönt.

[...] Da ich vorüber ging, fesselt' der Zauber  
[...] auch mich,  
und herein in die Berge  
mir die reizende Ferne schien,

[...] Du [...] hast dem Flüchtigen  
kühlenden Schatten geschenkt, und die Gestade sahen  
ihm alle nach, und es tönte  
aus den Wellen das liebliche Bild.

[...]

Sträucher blühten herab, bis wo im heitern Tal,  
an den Hügel gelehnt, oder dem Ufer hold,  
deine fröhlichen Gassen  
unter duftenden Gärten ruhn.

### **Gesang des Deutschen (Hölderlin)**

O heilig Herz der Völker, o Vaterland!  
Alldulnd, gleich der schweigenden Mutter Erd,  
Und allverkannt, wenn schon aus deiner  
Tiefe die Fremden ihr Bestes haben!

Sie ernten den Gedanken, den Geist von dir,  
Sie pflücken gern die Traube, doch höhnen sie  
Dich, ungestalte Rebe! daß du  
Schwankend den Boden und wild umirrest.

Du Land des hohen ernsteren Genius!  
Du Land der Liebe! bin ich der deine schon,  
Oft zürst ich weinend, daß du immer  
Blöde die eigene Seele leugnest.

Doch magst du manches Schöne nicht bergen mir,  
Oft stand ich überschauend das holde Grün,  
Den weiten Garten hoch in deinen  
Lüften auf hellem Gebirg und sah dich.

An deinen Strömen ging ich und dachte dich,  
Indes die Töne schüchtern die Nachtigall  
Auf schwanker Weide sang, und still auf  
Dämmerndem Grunde die Welle weilte.

Und an den Ufern sah ich die Städte blühn,  
Die Edlen, wo der Fleiß in der Werkstatt schweigt,  
Die Wissenschaft, wo deine Sonne  
Milde dem Künstler zum Ernste leuchtet.

Kennst du Minervas Kinder? sie wählten sich  
Den Ölbaum früh zum Lieblinge; kennst du sie?  
Noch lebt, noch waltet der Athener  
Seele, die sinnende, still bei Menschen,

Wenn Platons frommer Garten auch schon nicht mehr  
Am alten Strome grünt und der dürftige Mann  
Die Heldenasche pflügt, und scheu der  
Vogel der Nacht auf der Säule trauert.

O heilger Wald! o Attika! traf Er doch  
Mit seinem furchtbarn Strahle dich auch, so bald,  
Und eilten sie, die dich belebt, die  
Flammen entbunden zum Aether über?

Doch, wie der Frühling, wandelt der Genius  
Von Land zu Land. Und wir? ist denn Einer auch  
Von unsern Jünglingen, der nicht ein  
Ahnden, ein Rätsel der Brust, verschwiege?

Den deutschen Frauen danket! sie haben uns  
Der Götterbilder freundlichen Geist bewahrt,  
Und täglich süht der holde klare  
Friede das böse Gewirre wieder.

Wo sind jetzt Dichter, denen der Gott es gab,  
Wie unsern Alten, freudig und fromm zu sein,  
Wo Weise, wie die unsre sind? die  
Kalten und Kuhn, die Unbestechbarn!

### **Erinnerung (Eisler)**

O heilig Herz der Völker, o Vaterland!  
Alldulnd, gleich der schweigenden Mutter Erd,  
Und allverkannt, wenn schon aus deiner  
Tiefe die Fremden ihr Bestes haben!

Sie ernten den Gedanken, den Geist von dir,  
Sie pflücken gern die Traube, doch höhnen sie  
dich, ungestalte Rebe! daß du  
schwankend den Boden und wild umirrest.

[...]

Doch magst du manches Schöne nicht bergen mir,  
Oft stand ich überschauend das sanfte Grün,  
Den weiten Garten hoch in deinen  
Lüften auf hellem Gebirg und sah dich.

[...]

Und an den Ufern sah ich die Städte blühn,  
Die Edlen, wo der Fleiß in der Werkstatt schweigt,  
Die Wissenschaft, wo deine Sonne  
Milde dem Künstler zum Ernste leuchtet.

[...]

Nun! sei begrüßt in deinem Adel, mein Vaterland,  
Mit neuem Namen, reifste Frucht der Zeit!  
Du letzte und du erste aller  
Musen, Urania, sei begrüßt mir!

Noch säumst und schweigst du, sinnest ein freudig Werk,  
Das von dir zeuge, sinnest ein neu Gebild,  
Das einzig, wie du selber, das aus  
Liebe geboren und gut, wie du, sei –

Wo ist dein Delos, wo dein Olympia,  
Daß wir uns alle finden am höchsten Fest? -  
Doch wie errät der Sohn, was du den  
Deinen, Unsterbliche, längst bereitest?



## APPENDIX III

### English Translations of Eisler Texts

#### *Anakreontische Fragmente*

##### **I. Geselligkeit betreffend**

Der sei nicht mein Genöß,  
der mir zum Wein beim vollen Becher  
nicht vom Fehden erzählt und nicht vom leidigen Krieg;  
Sondern vielmehr in geselligem Frohsinn schwelgt  
und gerne von den Musen und Aphrodites holdseligen

Gaben mir schwätzt.  
Nicht nach der Thrakerin  
neigt sich verlangend mein Herz.  
Denn zum Weintrinker bin ich gemacht.

##### **II.**

Dir auch wurde Sehnsucht nach der Heimat tödlich.  
Dich schreckte der Süd nimmer, der winterlich stürmt.  
So fing dich die betrügliche Jahreszeit ein, und strömend  
Spülten die Wogen den Reiz lieblicher Jugend hinab.

##### **III. Die Unwürde des Alerns**

Grau bereits sind meine Schläfen,  
und das Haupt ist weiß geworden,  
Hin, dahin die holde Jugend;  
schon gealtert sind die Zähne.

Von dem süßen Leben ist mir nur  
ein Restchen Zeit geblieben.  
Oft mit Tränen dies bedaur' ich,  
vor dem Tartaros erbebend.

Denn entsetzlich ist des Hades Tiefe,  
leidvoll seine Straße,  
Offen steht der Stieg hinunter,  
nimmermehr herauf zu gehen.

##### **IV. Später Triumph**

Und um die Rippen zog er sich  
Ein kahles Ochsenfell, von Schmutz starrend,  
ein altes Schildfutteral.  
Und mit der Brotverkäuferin trieb er's  
und mit den mannssüchtigen Weibsstücken,  
den schmutzigsten.  
Unsauber ganz war sein Gewerbe.  
Oft in dem Block war sein Genick,  
desgleichen oft im Rad.  
Und oft auch mit Zuchtruten gepeitscht ward er.  
Und auch am Kopf geschändet und sein Bart gerupft.  
Und jetzt? Und jetzt? Den Prachtwagen besteigt er.

#### *Anacreon Fragments*

##### **I. Regarding companionship**

He will not be my friend,  
who over a full glass of wine  
speaks not of feuds and not of tiresome war;  
Rather, much better to indulge in friendly cheerfulness and  
happily prattle on about muses and Aphrodite's lovely gifts.

Toward the Thracian maid  
My heart does not incline longingly,  
For I was born a winedrinker.

##### **II.**

For you, too, the longing for home was deadly.  
The south never frightened you, with its wintery storms.  
So the deceitful seasons grabbed you, and streaming  
The waves washed away the charms of youth.

##### **III. The Indignity of Aging**

Gray are my temples,  
and my head has turned white,  
Gone is youth's sweetness;  
my teeth have fallen out.

Of sweet life  
only a tiny bit remains.  
Often with tears do I regret this,  
shuddering at Tartarus.

For terrible are the depths of Hades,  
sorrowful its avenues,  
Open is the way down,  
never to return.

##### **IV. Delayed triumph**

And around his ribs he wrapped  
a bare ox-hide, stiff with filth,  
an old shield cover.  
And he got busy with the bread seller,  
And with the man-crazy women,  
the filthiest.  
Unclean, too, was all of his business.  
His neck was often on the block,  
often too in the spokes.  
And often he was whipped with rods.  
And his head was also defiled and his beard pulled out.  
And now? And now? He is mounting the golden coach.

#### **V. In der Frühe**

Vom Dünnkuchen zum Morgenbrot  
Erst ein Stücklein mir brach ich;  
Trank auch einen Krug voll Wein dazu;  
Und zur zärtlichen Laute jetzo greif' ich.

Mein arm heimatlich Land,  
wann werde ich dich wiedersehn.  
Mein arm heimatlich Land.

#### ***V. In the early morning***

*From the thin cake for breakfast,  
I broke off a little piece.  
And drank a jug of wine with it.  
And now I reach for my gentle lute.*

*My poor homeland,  
when will I see you again.  
My poor homeland.*

---

#### ***Hölderlin-Fragmente***

##### **An die Hoffnung**

O Hoffnung! Holde, gütiggeschaffte!  
Die du das Haus der Trauernden nicht verschmähst,  
Und gerne dienend zwischen den Sterblichen waltest:

Wo bist du? Wo bist du? wenig lebt' ich;  
doch atmet kalt mein Abend schon.  
Und stille, den Schatten gleich,  
Bin ich schon hier. Und schon gesanglos  
Schlummert das schauernde Herz.

---

#### ***Hölderlin Fragments***

##### ***To Hope***

*O hope! Dear one, kind and concerned!  
You, who do not spurn the house of the sorrowful,  
And gladly serve among mortals:*

*Where are you? Where are you? I have hardly lived;  
Yet, my evening already breathes cold.  
And quietly, like shadows,  
I am already here; and already without song,  
Sleeps my shuddering heart.*

##### **Andenken**

Der Nordost wehet,  
der liebste unter den Winden mir,  
weil er gute Fahrt verheißet.  
Geh aber nun, grüße die schöne Garonne  
und die Gärten von Bordeaux,  
dort, wo am scharfen Ufer  
hingehet der Steg und in den Strom  
tief fällt der Bach,  
darüber aber hinschauet ein edel Paar  
von Eichen und Silberpappeln.

Am Feiertagen gehen die braunen Frauen daselbst  
auf seidnen Boden, zur Märzzeit,  
wenn gleich ist Tag und Nacht,  
und über langsamen Stegen,  
von goldenen Träumen schwer,  
einwiegende Lüfte ziehen.

##### ***Memories***

*The northeast wind blows,  
to me the dearest of winds,  
because it promises a good voyage.  
But go now, greet the beautiful Garonne  
and the gardens of Bordeaux,  
there, where on the rough bank  
the path goes and into the river  
deep falls the stream,  
while overhead are a noble pair  
of oaks and silver poplars, looking out.*

*On holidays the brown women walk  
on silken ground, in March,  
when day and night are equal,  
and over slow paths,  
heavy with golden dreams,  
drift lulling breezes.*

### **Elegie 1943**

Wie wenn die alten Wasser, in andern Zorn,  
in schrecklichern verwandelt wieder kämen,

So gärt' und wuchs und wogte von Jahr zu Jahr  
die unerhörte Schlacht, daß weit hüllt in  
Dunkel und Blässe das Haupt der Menschen.

Wer brachte den Fluch?  
Von heut ist er nicht und nicht von gestern.  
Und die zuerst das Maß verloren,  
unsre Väter wußten es nicht.

Zu lang, zu lang schon treten die Sterblichen  
sich gern aufs Haupt, den Nachbar fürchtend.

Und unstedt, irren und wirren, dem Chaos gleich,  
dem gärenden Geschlecht die Wünsche nach  
und wild ist und verzagt und kalt von Sorgen das Leben.

### **Die Heimat**

Froh kehrt der Schiffer heim an die hellen Strome  
von fernen Inseln, wo er geerntet hat.  
Wohl möchte ich gern zur Heimat wieder.  
Ach was hab' ich, wie Leid, geerntet.

Ihr holden Ufer, die ihr mich auferzogt,  
ach gebt ihr mir,  
ihr Wälder meiner Kindheit, wann ich  
wiederkehre, die Ruhe noch einmal wieder.

### **An eine Stadt**

Lange lieb ich dich schon, möchte dich, mir zur Lust,  
Mutter nennen, und dir schenken ein kunstloses Lied,  
Du, der Vaterlandsstädte  
ländlichschönste, so viel ich sah.

Wie der Vogel des Walds über die Gipfel fliegt,  
schwingt sich über den Strom, wo er vorbei dir glänzt  
leicht und kräftig die Brücke,  
die von Wagen und Menschen tönt.

Da ich vorüber ging, fesselt' der Zauber auch mich,  
und herein in die Berge  
mir die reizende Ferne schien,

Du hast dem Flüchtigen  
kühlenden Schatten geschenkt,  
und die Gestade sahen ihm alle nach,  
und es tönte aus den Wellen das liebliche Bild.

Sträucher blühten herab, bis wo im heitern Tal,  
an den Hügel gelehnt, oder dem Ufer hold,  
deine fröhlichen Gassen  
unter duftenden Gärten ruhn.

### **Elegy 1943**

*As the old waters, into another fury  
Terrifyingly grew and returned*

*So boiled and grew and swelled from year to year  
The battle like no other, until far and wide  
The peoples' heads were shrouded in darkness and pallor*

*Who brought this curse?  
It is not today's nor yesterday's,  
And those who first crossed the bounds,  
Our fathers, did it unknowingly.*

*Too long, too long have mortals trod  
Gleelessly upon the heads of others, fearing their neighbors.*

*And unsteadily, wildly, and confused, like chaos,  
Desires and wishes ferment,  
and life is wild and fearful and cold from worry.*

### **The home**

*The sailor happily returns home to the bright streams  
from distant islands, where he has labored.  
I, too, would like to return to my homeland.  
Ah, how I have reaped misery.*

*Your lovely shores, that raised me,  
ah, give to me,  
you forests of my childhood, when I  
come back, give me peace once more.*

### **To a City**

*Long have I loved you, have wanted to  
call you mother, and give you a simple song,  
you, the fatherland's city,  
most beautifully situated of the many I have seen.*

*Like a bird from the forest flying above the hills,  
vaulted over the stream, where it rolls by glistening,  
the bridge, elegant and strong,  
rumbles with the sounds of carts and men.*

*As I crossed it, the magic grabbed me,  
and deep in the mountains  
I could see far into the lovely surroundings.*

*You gave the fugitive  
cooling shade,  
and your shores saw him as he passed,  
and from the waves echoed the beautiful scene.*

*Bushes bloomed up to the edges of the valley  
where on the hills, or by your banks,  
your cheerful lanes  
rest under fragrant gardens.*

**Erinnerung**

O heilig Herz der Völker, o Vaterland!  
Alldulndend, gleich der schweigenden Mutter Erd,  
Und allverkannt, wenn schon aus deiner  
Tiefe die Fremden ihr Bestes haben!

Sie ernten den Gedanken, den Geist von dir,  
Sie pflücken gern die Traube, doch höhnen sie  
dich, ungestalte Rebe! daß du  
schwankend den Boden und wild umirrest.

Doch magst du manches Schöne nicht bergen mir,  
Oft stand ich überschauend das sanfte Grün,  
Den weiten Garten hoch in deinen  
Lüften auf hellem Gebirg und sah dich.

Und an den Ufern sah ich die Städte blühn,  
Die Edlen, wo der Fleiß in der Werkstatt schweigt,  
Die Wissenschaft, wo deine Sonne  
Milde dem Künstler zum Ernste leuchtet.

**Remembrance**

*O holy heart of the people, o fatherland!  
Long-suffering, like the silent mother earth,  
misunderstood, when from your depths  
strangers have found their best.*

*They reaped thoughts and spirits from you  
they happily picked the grape,  
but they ridiculed you, shapeless vine,  
so that you fell to the ground and roamed wildly.*

*But you cannot hide your many beauties from me.  
I often stood looking over the gentle green,  
the expansive gardens high in the air  
on the bright mountains and saw you.*

*And on the banks I saw the cities bloom,  
the noble ones, where industry silences the workshops,  
knowledge, whose mild sun  
enlightens the artist to be earnest.*

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